

Interreg



2 Seas Mers Zeeën

SIREE

Social Integration of Refugees through Education and Self-Employment

A collaboration between:

Project partners:



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List of terms/Glossary

Co-creation: A process which draws different communities together to solve common problems with all participants taking part in the process and influencing the results.

Enterprise: The generation and application of ideas, which are set within practical situations during a project or undertaking.

Entrepreneurship: Applying to both individuals and groups including teams or organisations, entrepreneurship refers to value creation in the private, public and third sectors, and in any hybrid combination of the three.

Learning Community: A group of people with an interest in a particular issue, who would like to exchange knowledge and learn from each other. It can have many forms, with people from different groups, organisations and individuals not belonging to any organisation.

Migrant: Someone who has left their country in search of improving their economic or social position.

Newcomer: People who have recently started to live in a country.

Person seeking asylum: Someone fleeing persecution or conflict and seeking international protection under the 1951 Refugee Convention on the Status of Refugees.

Refugee: An asylum seeker whose claim has been approved.

Start-up: Within the SIREE project, a business start-up is any new business.

Superdiversity: Refers to a new demographic reality that changes our societies. It includes a significant increase in the number of persons with a migrant background, as well as increased diversity between immigrant and ethnic minority groups as well as within them.

Third-country national (TCN): Refers to asylum seekers, refugees, and economic migrants.

Executive Summary

The SIREE project was created to make a palpable difference to the lives of newcomers who arrived in the 2 Seas region to begin a new chapter in unfamiliar surroundings. This ebook combines the solid efforts of partners across the region – in the UK, France, Belgium and the Netherlands – to lay out large breadcrumbs of practical tips and helpful shortcuts to aid education, government and business agencies to help new migrants in constructive ways. Two of the most important things to help newcomers survive in an unknown destination are to build confidence leading them to positive actions, and feeling like they can achieve in their new home – both can be done through education and self-employment.

The dual focus on helping the individual and the economy is rooted throughout the ebook discussion, with practical examples of how to engage newcomers – young and adult – to both unearth and feel self-assured in their existing skills to flourish in society through school and work. We can reach for the calculator to analyse the effectiveness of a project like this with statistics and numerical achievements, but one of the most vital wins the SIREE project has attained is successfully imprinting itself onto the hearts of its participants. It has forged many long-term connections, whether between teachers and students, or business-owners and their entrepreneurial protégés. Humans engaging with humans through food, laughter, activities and a simple cup of tea or coffee. Those who have benefitted from the project can now pay it forward, by becoming integrated members of their communities, helping others and positively jumping forward in their own achievements to inspire those around them.

During the project across the four regions, 52 Learning Communities (LCs) were created that successfully brought together and engaged parents, children and teachers at educational institutions. Parents and teachers like many others across the world connected through the common bond of wanting their children to excel, and through the LCs had frank discussions about worries and barriers on racism, language skills and participation levels. The LCs shone a light on the hard work of teachers helping children to integrate, but also how vital it is to improve their knowledge of different cultures to understand the needs of newcomers.

A guide informed by the partners' representatives on the ground created the ebook's Teacher Training Modules that offer vital lessons on how to work with migrants who live with their own unique stories often involving trauma, displacement and distrust. School is the springboard leading young minds into the workforce, and just as children have dreams they wish to fulfil, so do their parents. Self-employment is an effective path to embed adult newcomers into the economy, and the SIREE project partners helped boost confidence, worked on business plans and paired participants up with buddies to bring ideas to fruition for 35 new businesses.

As the work of the SIREE project continues in the long-term, the aim for this ebook is to reach as many organisations as possible to encourage them to replicate the creation of LCs, work closely with entrepreneurs and for teachers to sensitively deal with newcomer students. At a time when the world is finding ways to unite due to the Covid-19 virus, this guide is a helpful tool to aid institutions to understand the needs of newcomers, help with economic growth and embrace cultural understanding.

Introduction

More than 1.2 million refugees arrived to begin a new life in Europe in 2016, with 147,815 within the 2 Seas region alone. Divided by the North Sea and the English Channel, this coastal region including parts of England, France, Belgium and the Netherlands is connected by the same common challenge – how to integrate newcomers.

Entering an unknown city or town to start a new life means dealing with the basic needs of shelter, clothing and food and water, and once this practical checklist is completed comes healthcare, education, and employment. The desire for newcomers to feel they belong in those communities, through school and work, is a paramount consideration.

The 2 Seas region struggles with the challenges of how to integrate newcomer families into education and support them to become economically independent. Until this happens refugees will continue to be socially excluded and lose their economic potential.

With more than €10,000 per refugee a year spent on supporting the new arrivals and helping them to integrate into the local economy, the need for effective social and economic integration is now urgent.

The SIREE (Social Integration of Refugees through Education and Self-Employment) project, aimed to improve the social and economic integration of refugees¹ in the 2 Seas region by supporting their integration into education through the creation of Learning Communities, and by increasing their prospects of economic independence through self-employment.

By using the methodology of co-creation, which draws different communities together to solve common problems, the SIREE project contributed to tackling the social exclusion of newcomers. The experience of the project provides crucial learning that could benefit organisations and agencies, who want to improve the way they work with newcomers across many European regions.

The aim of this ebook is to make the findings of the SIREE project accessible to a wide range of audiences to share the learning gained. These audiences include schools, teachers, adult education services, adult training organisations, regional Chambers of Commerce, and other decision-makers at local and regional levels.

The book consists of five chapters. An introductory chapter giving an overview of the SIREE project; second, Learning Communities; third, Teacher Training Modules; fourth, Facilitating Entrepreneurship, and a concluding chapter highlighting key findings and outlining a series of recommendations for future projects.

¹ Definitions: SIREE has chosen to define the research population using the following criteria:

- a. The birthplace of respondents, their maternal grandmother and their parents
- b. The nationality of respondents and of their parents
- c. Language spoken at home. When these criteria indicate a migration background from Third Countries, the respondent will be included in the research population and classified as “migrant”
- d. Legal status of the respondent in the region under study. When this criterion indicates a refugee status, the respondent will be classified as a “refugee” within the research population
- e. When we discuss refugees and migrants they will be termed as “newcomers”

(For References [click here](#))

1 Overview of SIREE Project

The SIREE project started life in March 2018 and is due to be completed by December 2021. With a global pandemic as a backdrop for a portion of the work, the original project period was extended due to the limitations of national lockdowns, social distancing and working and teaching from home. The project aimed to improve the social and economic integration of newcomers in the 2 Seas regions, by using co-creation and Learning Communities. It helped increase social inclusion in schools and facilitate support for newcomers to help identify their own skills development and new business opportunities prior to becoming self-employed.

A Learning Community (LC) is a group of people who have an interest in a particular issue, would like to exchange knowledge and learn from each other.

It can have many forms, with people from different groups, institutions and individuals not belonging to any particular organisation. The SIREE project created 52 new LCs in schools bringing together children, students, parents, and teachers. Important positives gained from the LCs included helping to support an increase in pre-school children attendance, a rise in the uptake of adult education and most vitally increasing parents' involvement in the education of their children. There were 443 LC sessions in total with 2,412 participants.

To ensure the long-term use of LCs in schools, the SIREE project established a new training course for student teachers informed by the experience of the 52 LCs. Teachers are the bedrock of a pupil's scholastic life working in an environment where the student will spend a significant portion of the day. Training 457 teachers and student teachers was the most productive way to ensure future support was given at a greater and more effective level to newcomer families.

With the support for young newcomers in mind, the SIREE project recognised the need to also bolster adults to help become self-employed. Using the process of co-creation it supported newcomers to identify their skills development, develop market testing of their ideas and link up with local business networks towards the goal of creating their own firm.

This led to the successful generation of 35 new newcomer businesses.

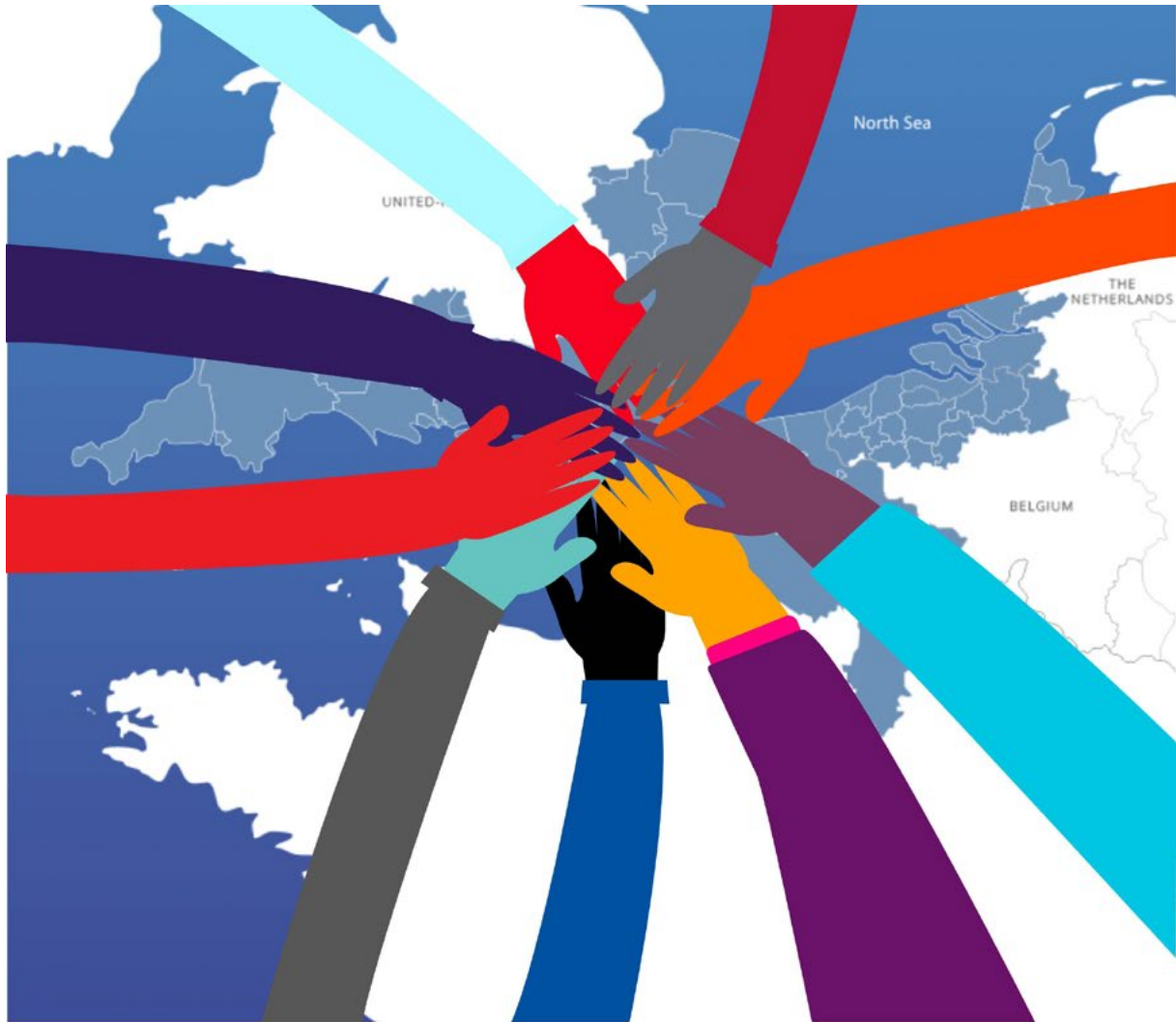
More than 500 people enhanced their entrepreneurial skills by attending workshops and webinars or accessing the online training platform created by the project.



Point of view: Key benefits gained by new businesses created during the SIREE project included self-confidence, a place in society, skills development, daily interactions with new clients and helping to grow the local economy.

1.1 Partners

The SIREE project was a collaboration between **University of Greenwich** (UK), **VIVES University of Applied Sciences** (West Flanders, Belgium), **University College Roosevelt** (Middelburg, Netherlands), **Medway Plus** (Kent, UK), **City of Mechelen** (Belgium), **ADICE** (Roubaix, France), **Municipality of Middelburg** (Netherlands), **ARhus** (Roeselare, Belgium) and **House of Learning** (West Flanders, Belgium).



A unique opportunity was created for universities, private and not-for-profit companies, municipalities, local government and refugee organisations – who did not normally work together – to partner up and share practical ideas and plans. These vital groups met up twice annually during the duration of the project to share skills and knowledge, exchange experiences and evaluate their work. As the process of collaboration was key to the success of the project, smaller working groups also met to develop specific activities.

Bringing together different disciplines, experiences, and modes of delivery resulted in the creation of new ways of working. The SIREE project was naturally impacted by the global coronavirus pandemic, which stopped almost all face-to-face activities during 2020 from March. The arrival of Covid-19 led to the establishment of online engagement, as well as a re-orientation of some of the project activities. A great positive was the strong communication links originally established between the project partners successfully generated new initiatives during this time.

1.2 Implementing the SIREE project

The three component parts of the SIREE project – **Learning Communities (LCs), newly-qualified teacher training and facilitated entrepreneurship** – were developed through the process of recognising the needs in each region. The project considered what the barriers were to social integration in the education sector and in entrepreneurship, which then imbued the methodologies and interventions delivered.

The three component parts were:

- 1) By bringing together parents, students, and teachers into LCs, the SIREE project showed how a co-creation model can be used in schools and colleges to increase student and parent involvement. LCs benefitted newcomer parents and children from pre-school to secondary school level, and adult students, by asking them to share ideas about how schools could be more accessible and welcoming.
- 2) A model teacher training course focused on how trainee teachers could actively promote the integration of newcomers, as well as unsupported children in their practice in schools. Again, the SIREE project worked closely with teachers using the co-creation model to build up both their skills and confidence about working with newcomer families.
- 3) A series of entrepreneurship workshops introduced various forms of support to newcomers interested in setting up their own businesses. Entrepreneurial Action Plans (EAPs), mentoring and online resources helped newcomers to recognise and value their entrepreneurial skills and create new businesses or use those skills in other areas.

Four resources were generated for wider dissemination to aid shared learning from the experiences of the SIREE project. As well as providing an account of the SIREE project, designed to share the learning which was gained during the implementation of the LCs, teacher training modules and different forms of entrepreneurial support, this ebook also offers three further helpful resources:

- 1) Two demonstration guides on the social and economic integration of newcomers through the education system and entrepreneurship to benefit the wider 2 Seas region
- 2) A website for newcomer entrepreneurs to access vital information to start a business
- 3) Several business networks that bring together newcomer entrepreneurs

1.3 The SIREE project in numbers

Figure 1.1 shows the SIREE project's key numbers and achievements.

Figure 1.1



52

LEARNING
COMMUNITIES

9

LEARNING
OBJECTIVES

800+

WEBSITE
USERS

500+

LEARNING
COMMUNITY
MEETINGS

450+

STUDENT TEACHERS
AND TEACHERS
TAUGHT

150+

WORKSHOP
ATTENDEES

2400+

LEARNING
COMMUNITY
PARTICIPANTS

22

TEACHERS
EXPERIENCED
MOBILITY

40

BUSINESSES
CREATED

Learning Communities comprised of students, parents, teachers and others to work together to create solutions and embed actions.

Student teachers taught through a module in the Netherlands and a course in Belgium. Workshops for teachers in the Netherlands, Belgium and the UK.

Entrepreneurs had access to a website, workshops, webinars, mentorship, networks and individual support.

1.4 Evaluation snapshot

Co-creation underpinned the SIREE project. An evaluation of the project was essential if lessons learnt were to be disseminated successfully, but assessing such a multi-faceted project presented some challenges. The evaluation design had to encompass an approach allowing specific outcomes to be measured, and capturing some of the valuable exchanges within groups and one-to-one meetings. A key method to achieve this was extensive record-keeping. Learning Community (LC) facilitators diligently recorded details of each meeting and subsequent action plans. Measures used to facilitate entrepreneurship were noted in terms of planning, implementation and uptake. Entrepreneurial Action Plans (EAPs) were analysed at different stages of their development, and interviews were conducted with policymakers both at the beginning and end of the project. A series of case studies were developed through interviews, which provided in-depth accounts of how newcomers and migrants had approached and benefitted from the SIREE project.

Learning Communities in schools

Learning Communities (LCs) were deemed effective by bringing together parents, students and teachers, which resulted in amplifying the voices of newcomers into schools and helping to make them more inclusive institutions. This was based on a shared interest and respect for each other's culture, beliefs and action. It was also dependent on people listening and entering into a dialogue with each other about issues that might form barriers to social integration.

LCs were able to bring people together to develop creative solutions to issues. They helped vulnerable groups feel heard, acknowledged, and recognised, and increased their sense of belonging at school and ownership in school making processes. It also helped staff to learn about the needs of vulnerable groups that they sometimes found hard to reach, which led to new positive actions and activities. The LCs changed the attitude of teachers towards newcomers, making them more sensitive and inclusive.

Teacher training modules

The training modules created for teachers were effective in delivering learning outcomes. The inaugural five students completed the educational minor module at the Inholland University of Applied Sciences teacher's education institute, in the Netherlands. They showed sufficient or good mastery of its observable learning outcomes thus adhering to the module's learning objectives. Specifically, 77% of the observable outcomes were mastered.

Initially students of teacher's education in both countries had moderate self-efficacy in the area of learning objectives of the module preparing them to provide education to newcomer children. Their initial confidence fluctuated between 66% and 69%. There was a very substantial increase of self-efficacy among students who completed the module in the Netherlands in the first half of 2020.

Facilitating entrepreneurship

The workshop participants had increased their understanding of what it meant to be an entrepreneur, and the majority of participants said they would recommend the event to a friend. Linking up fledgling entrepreneurs with experts definitely helped them gain advice on areas they were unsure about, such as generating a business plan. Workshops and personal interaction increased the knowledge gained to forge ahead and create a business. Through the project we learnt a detailed knowledge of business and legal context in each country has to be offered and is essential to move forward.

The diversity in the respondents' backgrounds suggested entrepreneurship support programmes have to be targeted at a range of newcomer backgrounds, rather than specific country backgrounds.

It is not enough to offer advice on how to run a business through workshops, but to also offer care and attention to the obstacles newcomers could encounter. Whether the person worries about lack of experience, the desire for a female mentor, or an idea that needs nurturing, they can be boosted to jump the hurdles in front of them. The goal is to ensure newcomers realise help is there to guide them through their business plan, and signpost them through the process to achieve their ambitions.

Key Points - Evaluation Snapshot



The use of Learning Communities (LCs) was effective in helping schools become more inclusive institutions



Teacher training modules were effective in delivering learning outcomes and made the participants more aware of how to teach inclusively



Facilitating entrepreneurship through workshops, Entrepreneurial Action Plans (EAPs), mentoring, and networking led to a wider understanding of how to start a business, but advice was also needed to help newcomers overcome personal barriers



Effective partnership working was the key to success

SIREE in Action

Watch a video from the SIREE in Action series on the project's YouTube channel called **"Opportunities, diversity, talent, commitment, drive and energy in Mechelen"** about the efforts made in the city of Mechelen, Belgium, to reduce obstacles to help migrants both in school and work.



2 Learning Communities

2.1 Introduction

As the school population in the four SIREE partner regions have become more ethnically and culturally diverse, it is clear the education systems in each country have failed to maximise the potential of students whether young or adult. The performance gap between students with a newcomer background and fellow pupils has indicated that the former feel less of a connection with the school.

This chapter focuses on the ethnic and cultural challenges facing educational systems in the partner regions today (section 2.2). It also considers how the SIREE project has incorporated the voices of newcomers to make schools more inclusive and culturally sensitive, through the installation of Learning Communities (LCs). At the heart of this chapter we share what the LCs entail and explain how they help. Offering practical examples from the project partners (sections 2.3 to 2.6) helps to illuminate the theoretical section, which sets out the approach and organisation of the LCs.

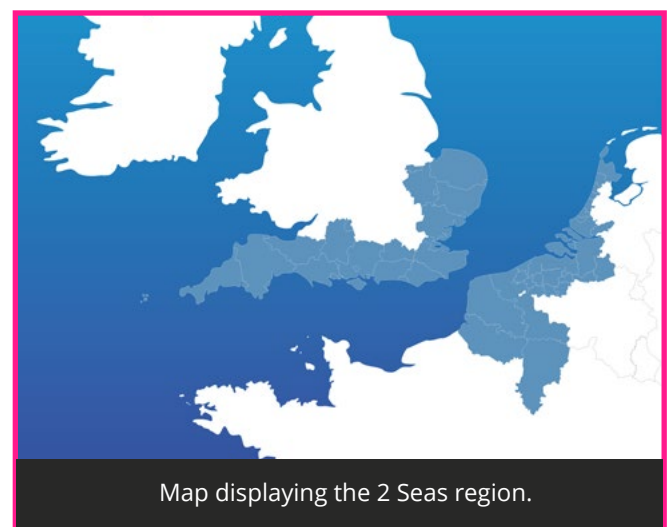
Since the project was affected by the Covid-19 outbreak, we also describe the impact of the restrictions during the course of the project (section 2.7). Another vital experience is shared through the perspectives of the participants where we discover the added value of the LCs, and whether this proved to be a sustainable approach (section 2.8), and we end with an overview of the different generated outputs, informed by the preliminary research and the LCs (section 2.9). With this chapter we hope to positively encourage education practitioners to set up their own LCs in future, and hope they seek out the demonstration guide that intends to light the way towards greater understanding of the practicalities involved.

2.2 Needs assessment

2.2.1 Education, superdiversity and the refugee crisis

In recent decades, the 2 Seas region has experienced unprecedented changes in both the number and direction of migration flows. In the post-World War Two era, known as the “age of migration” (de Haas, Castles and Miller, 2019), the share of the immigrant population has increased from guest workers in the 1950s and 1960s to more diversified migration flows in recent decades. That has included highly skilled professionals, refugees, family migrants, unaccompanied minors, and students.

The diversification of reasons for migration went hand in hand with diversification in terms of ethnic and cultural background, religion, legal status, language, generation, and socio-economic status. This diversity in the diversity is characteristic of the superdiverse society as we know it today (Vertovec, 2007).



Map displaying the 2 Seas region.

While this superdiversity enriches societies because of the valuable knowledge and skills immigrants bring to their host countries, it also forces existing systems to adapt to the new reality including schools. All countries in the 2 Seas region have a long tradition of immigration, but there are key differences to consider.






Characteristic for recent immigrants entering the UK is they tend to be highly educated, and they arrive from within the European Union (EU). In France, the Netherlands and Belgium the migrant population is largely made up of previous guest workers and their children and grandchildren. There are relatively few new immigrants, with the exception of humanitarian immigrants (forcibly displaced people) (OECD, 2018a). In 2015, more than a million refugees arrived in Europe². This influx has fast-forwarded the increase of more inclusive educational landscapes, so the vital needs of the most vulnerable children and families are met. This situation has demanded rapid adjustments as schools had to quickly accommodate the large numbers of refugee children – often in regions that had previously been for the most part ethnically and culturally homogenous.

Despite the great motivation school staff exhibit to teach newcomers and other students with migrant backgrounds, they are often not well equipped to do so in an ethnically and culturally diverse setting – as they lack knowledge, resources, and expertise to understand the history and current circumstances of each student. In addition to the increasing number of people with refugee protection status, EU member states are also confronted with a growing number of first, second and third generation immigrants, as many children are born in the host country but have a parent(s) or grandparent(s) who were born abroad. For instance, in the city of Antwerp, in Belgium, three in four children aged 10 – of which most are born there – have roots in migration³.

Although this has often been regarded as a big city phenomenon, recently smaller cities and rural areas are witnessing a sharp rise in the number of children with a migrant background – whether first, second or third generation. This increase is in turn reflected in the school population. The share of students with an immigrant background across OECD countries increased from 10% in 2009 to 13% in 2018 (OECD, 2019a). **Table 2.1** shows the share of first-generation immigrant students among the 15-year-old student population, as well as the linguistic diversity in the 2 Seas region.

Table 2.1: *Percentage of immigrant pupils among 15-year-old student populations in 2 Seas region.*

1: Percentage of immigrant among 15-year-old students in 2 Seas region.

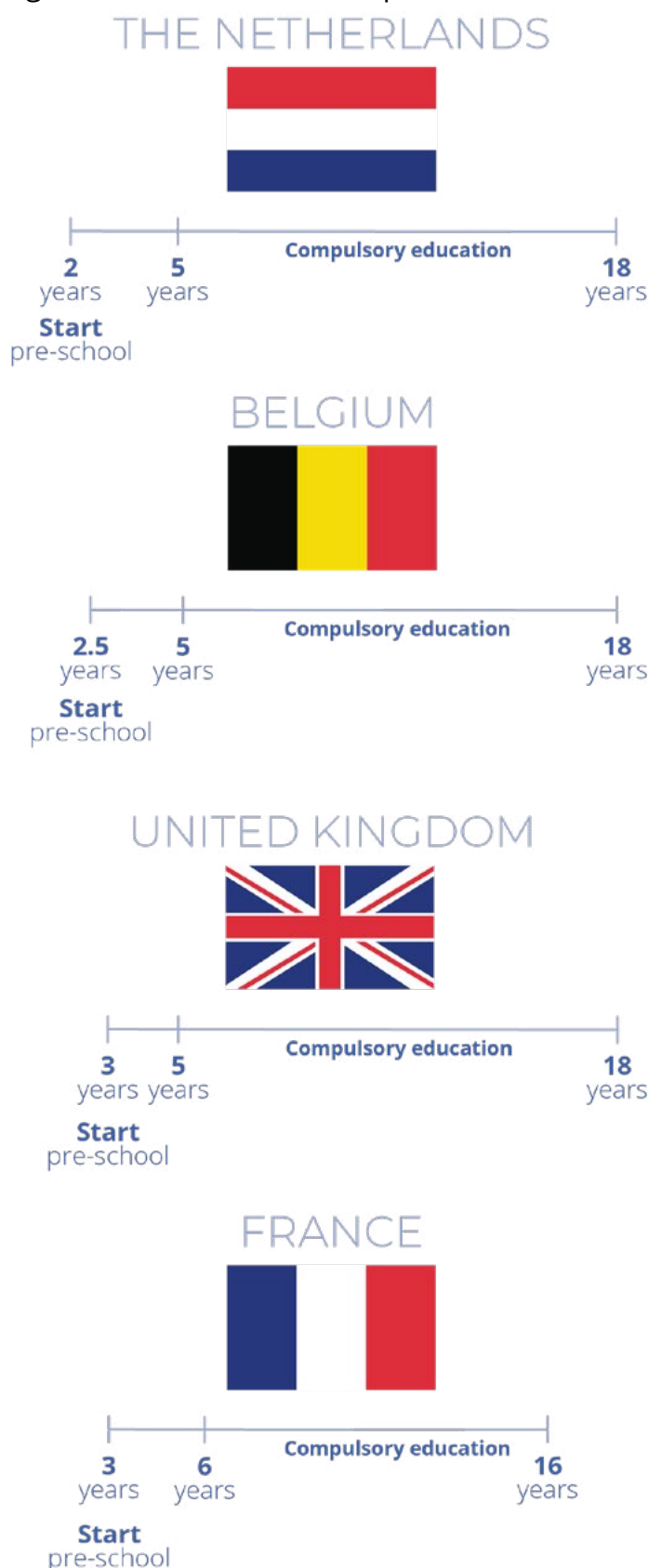
	 UNITED KINGDOM	 THE NETHERLANDS	 BELGIUM	 FRANCE	 EUROPE	
Students	With immigrant background (2015) <small>Source: OECD (2018b)</small>	28.55%	20.59%	33.45%	26.26%	21.49%
	First-generation immigrants (2018) <small>Source: OECD (2019b)</small>	9%	<3%	9%	5%	-
	Who at home do not speak the language of instruction (2018) <small>Source: OECD (2019b)</small>	12%	10%	18%	11%	-

² <https://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2015/12/5683d0b56/million-sea-arrivals-reach-europe-2015.html>

³ <https://www.demorgen.be/nieuws/antwerpen-telt-meer-inwoners-met-dan-zonder-migratieachtergrond~bd8aba50/>

2.2.2 Education for newcomer students in the 2 Seas region

Early access to schooling is certainly pivotal to the educational success of students. To guarantee refugee pupils get access to education, Article 14 of the Directive 2013/33/EU of the European Parliament and Council stipulates **access to the education system should be provided within three months from the date of the asylum application**, and newcomer students should receive preparatory classes to facilitate their integration into mainstream education (Koehler and Schneider, 2019). The four countries do however differ in terms of the age at which children start pre-school and compulsory education (see **Figure 2.1**).



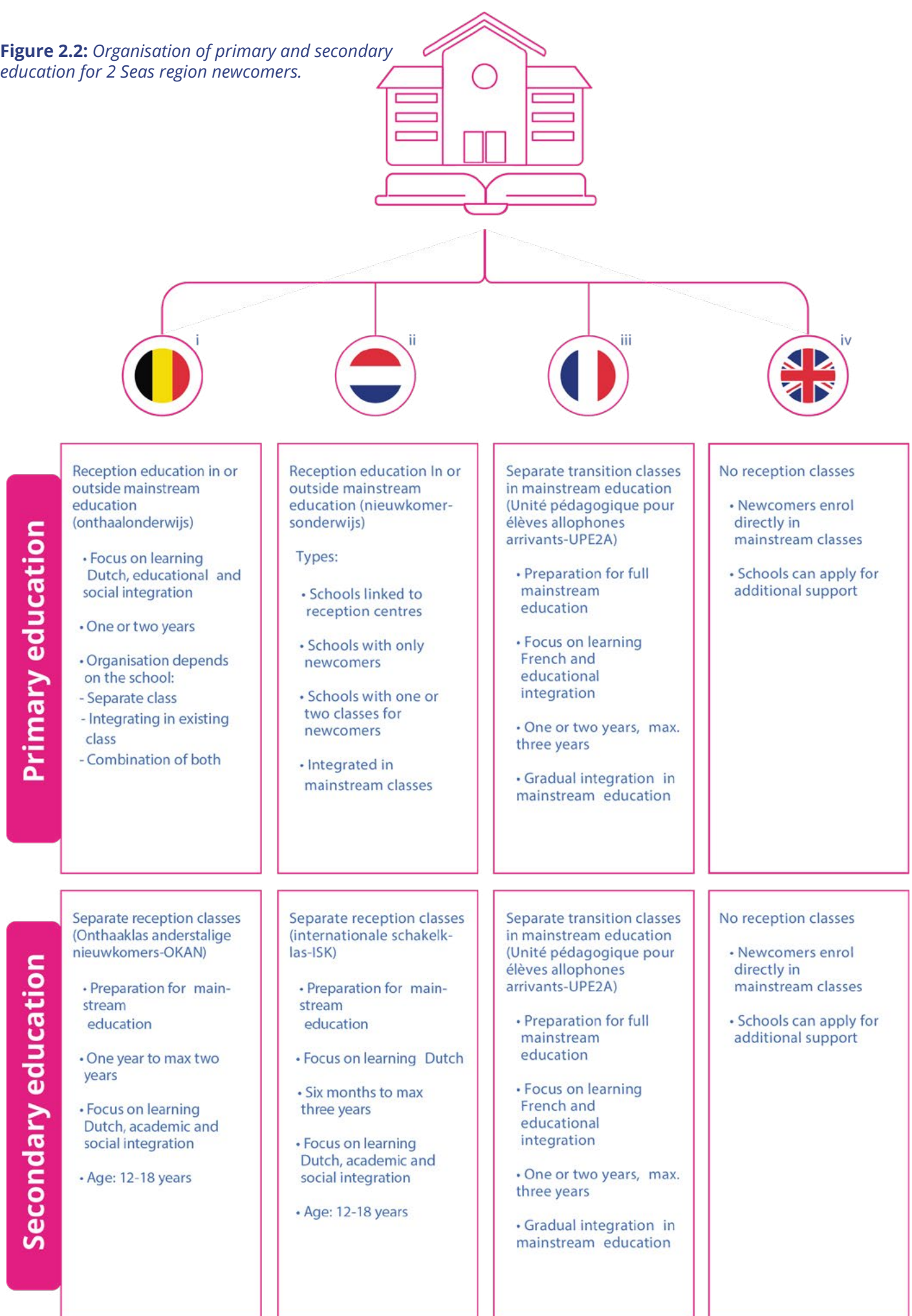
To support newcomers' integration into mainstream education they receive additional and necessary support, helping students gain knowledge of the societal and educational system and ways of learning, as well as the language of instruction (country's official language). It depends on the host country how this support is organised and when immersion in mainstream education occurs.

Figure 2.2 sets out the differences of how and when newcomer students are integrated into mainstream education. In segregated tracks or routes where children are integrated at a later stage, there is variation in the maximum number of years spent in preparatory classes, and the amount of curriculum subjects covered in newcomer education. In France, the maximum duration on a segregated track is three years with six curriculum subjects compared to a maximum of two years in Flanders, Belgium (secondary education only) with three subjects⁴. In the Netherlands there are no top-level regulations on which subjects should be covered (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2019).

⁴ In reality, usually more subjects are covered.

Figure 2.1: Age pupils begin pre-school and age of compulsory education in 2 Seas region.

Figure 2.2: Organisation of primary and secondary education for 2 Seas region newcomers.



i <https://onderwijs.vlaanderen.be/nl/wat-is-onthaalonderwijs>

ii <https://www.lowan.nl/vo/isk-en-het-nederlands-onderwijssysteem>; <https://www.onderwijsinspectie.nl/onderwerpen/onderwijs-aan-nieuwkomers/vraag-en-antwoord/waar-gaan-nieuwkomers-naar-school>

iii Koehler and Schneider (2019)

iv <https://www.infomigrants.net/en/webdoc/102/coming-to-france-and-enrolling-in-school>; <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/non-native-education/france.php>

There continues to be plenty of scholarly and political debate on the timing of immersion in mainstream education, and the level of second language skills needed before the transition. Based on a review study of newcomer education, Koehler and Schneider (2019) argue that immediate immersion is preferred and separate classes for newcomer students should be as short as possible – on the condition that “informed concepts, accompaniment and sufficient personnel” is available (Koehler and Schneider, 2019, p.14). Whereas in the UK students are immediately put into mainstream education, many pupils do not receive the necessary assistance since schools and municipalities do not always apply for additional funding and support (MIPEX, 2020).

From a recent study carried out as part of the SIREE project we learnt newcomers – students and their parents – have mixed feelings about separated reception classes. On the one hand, newcomers welcomed the high quality of teaching materials and specialised language teachers. They also considered reception schools safe places during their first steps into the country, and somewhere it was easy to meet new friends. On the other hand, parents and students felt greater contact with the native-born population was pivotal to improve language skills and facilitate social integration, and too much focus on language acquisition in the first years would hinder the student’s possibilities for future education (Van Maele and Poeze, 2018).

Children in the age of compulsory education enrol in primary, secondary or separated preparatory tracks. Those who have turned 18 but are in ongoing educational trajectories can generally continue pursuing higher education. Yet, access to education for newcomers above 18 is more complicated and often denied (Koehler and Schneider, 2019). **It is vital to realise that adult education is an important emancipating tool for newcomers, as it helps them to become financially independent, to socially integrate and to become active members of society.**

2.2.3 Ethnic inequality in education

Quality education is pivotal to the structural integration of children and adults with a migrant background (Koehler and Schneider, 2019). Youngsters face many challenges when accessing a decent schooling, while educational systems also deal with a multitude of issues to address their specific needs to help maximise opportunities. When the requirements of young students with a migration background are not properly met, the implications for both children and families can include a severe negative impact on their economic situation and wellbeing. It is paramount to consider the educational inequalities of students with an immigrant background, and ensure the right type of support and encouragement is offered.

Across the 2 Seas region, students of migrant background are overrepresented in vocational and technical tracks that do not prepare them for higher education, and pupils are more likely to repeat school years or leave school without a qualification (Alba and Silberman, 2009; Felouzis et al., 2015; Gijsberts and Herwijer, 2007; Unia, 2018). In France and Belgium, the school leaving rates among foreign-born students are around double compared to the native-born population. The story is different in both the Netherlands and the UK, as the early school leaving rate is lower among foreign-born pupils than the native population. In the Netherlands, the rate for early school leaving among the foreign-born population is even among the lowest in Europe (6.6%) (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2019).

An interesting statistic is the average reading performance of students with a migrant background is lower compared to non-immigrant students. This is a difference that can only partially be explained by the socio-economic profile of the pupil, and it is even more pronounced for first-generation migrant students (OECD, 2019c). The foreign-born population in the 2 Seas region is also less likely to complete upper secondary or post-secondary education, with a difference of around 10 percentage points with the native-born population in the four countries (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2019).

Importantly, students with a migrant background – more specifically first-generation immigrant students – report lower levels of wellbeing, for instance a sense of belonging, life satisfaction, and schoolwork-related anxiety (OECD, 2018b). An exception is found in the Netherlands where immigrant students feel more satisfied with their lives, although the difference with non-migrant students is small (OECD, 2019a). Students who do not speak the language of instruction (the country's language) are also more likely to be bullied, and feel a lower sense of belonging at school compared to students who speak the language at home (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2019). These figures are the result of numerous educational barriers that interrelate in complex ways on individual, school, and systemic levels, as illustrated by the following quote:

"I do think that those barriers [for the educational integration of immigrant students] really are a string of barriers. You cannot expect simple answers to that. It is not just about language, it is not just about background, nor just about money [...] different small things all together matter."

Interview with person responsible for equal opportunities, secondary education, Flanders, Belgium (Van Maele and Poeze, 2018).

Below we limit ourselves to a selection of factors – the individual student and family, school and community and systemic levels – that can hinder the educational integration of migrant students. For a more complete overview we refer to Van Maele and Poeze (2018).

Individual student and family level

For newcomers, individual and family characteristics relate to insufficient knowledge about the education system of the host country, as well as language barriers, trauma, interrupted educational pathways due to their migration or refugee history, incompatibility of educational systems with new and different academic expectation, and previously obtained qualifications that are not validated in the host country (Koehler et al., 2018)⁵.

Limited knowledge about the school system and poor language skills may impact parents' capacity to support their children (OECD, 2019c). Also, a lack of schooling in the home country or exposure to a different school culture may affect educational integration. Such as when students have a different set of school attitudes, sense of planning and time, this may cause back and forth frustration and incomprehension (Van Maele and Poeze, 2018).

Generally, migrant students are at greater risk to be socio-economically disadvantaged. For instance, in France and the Netherlands, almost one in two immigrant students was disadvantaged (OECD, 2019a). Insufficient financial resources pose additional challenges to the social and educational integration when families are unable to pay for school fees and supplies, as well as extracurricular or leisure activities (Van Maele and Poeze, 2018). Financial barriers also challenge adult students' access to language classes and tertiary education, which does not only include entry fees but also school supplies⁶.

5 <https://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/united-kingdom/reception-conditions/employment-and-education/access-education>

6 <https://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/united-kingdom/reception-conditions/employment-and-education/access-education>

Related to this are poor housing conditions, and also crowded reception centres, where students do not often have a quiet place to study. Newcomer children and youth are also frequently confronted with adult responsibilities that distract them from school, and sometimes literally take them out of education when appointments are scheduled during school hours. More coordination among those who schedule such appointments and hiring interpreters so children do not have to take on this role, could partially resolve these problems (Van Maele and Poeze, 2018).

The age of the newcomer student is also relevant. Younger students who are immersed in mainstream primary education can catch up relatively quickly in terms of language acquisition and academic skills, whereas older students may experience more difficulties. Due to the language gap, older students may be placed in classes with younger students, which can have a profound effect on the student's emotional and social wellbeing and language development. Additional factors hinder access for 18+ newcomer students, as due to their age they face difficulties to obtain the right skills and diplomas that allow them access to training programmes (Van Maele and Poeze, 2018).

Whether students are accompanied by guardians or one or both parents, also has an impact on their educational career. Parents and guardians are important providers of emotional and motivational support to their children's education. Unawareness of educational expectations and the educational system, in addition to language barriers, experiences of trauma, grief or stress about the new situation, may cause suboptimal parental involvement (Van Maele and Poeze, 2018). The situation for unaccompanied minors is even more severe, as emotional struggles in addition to a lack of support networks and financial concerns causes them to be more often absent from school⁷.

Finally, the legal status of the student and their family also has an impact on educational integration. Youngsters have the right to attend compulsory education, independent of their legal status, but this is less evident when it comes to internships and domestic and international school trips. Crucially, once students without a legal status fall outside of compulsory school age, their right to education expires.

The consequences are particularly pronounced for unaccompanied minors who did not obtain a residence permit before they turned 18 (Ghaemina, Ghorashi and Crul, 2017). Legal status issues and the uncertainties surrounding it also have an impact on the student's financial situation, wellbeing and motivation (Van Maele and Poeze, 2018).

School and community level

For newcomer students who do not speak the language of instruction and who are new to the educational system, it is particularly important that schools organise a warm welcome. This is, however, not always the case. One student in Belgium tellingly described his first time in reception education as feeling that he **"was thrown to the wolves"** and would have liked to **"have had some supervision at that moment or that my mom could have stayed with me for a while..."** (Van Maele and Poeze, 2018, p.33). A warm transition will help all students feel welcome and safe at school, but is particularly relevant for unaccompanied minors and pupils with trauma.

7 <https://www.pharos.nl/factsheets/alleenstaande-minderjarige-vreemdelingen-amvs/>;
http://www.agodi.be/sites/default/files/atoms/files/-Rapport_Agodi_OnthaalonderwijsOKAN_2014-2016.pdf

Schools seem to still insufficiently address the individual needs of newcomers, not least because of a lack of expertise, finances, and cooperation with professional therapists (Van Maele and Poeze, 2018). Related to this is a general need for educational materials and teaching skills that are adjusted to the individual requirements and age of the student.

This can be particularly stressful for the teacher – and students – in the case of a large influx of newcomer students as the following quote illustrates:

“Having a common language is important to teach, but also to make appointments, to have structure. I have 28 children in my classroom of which only eight understand me well and 12 do not understand me at all. This means that everything is blocked. In normal circumstances the newcomer students could look at other children and imitate them. But that is not possible, because there is such a large group that does not do what is asked because they just do not understand. Sometimes I really don't know how to cope with this.”

Pre-primary schoolteacher, Belgium.

However, additional support is not always readily available. This is a more general concern from pre-primary to adult education, since schools are often confronted with insufficient financial resources to support teachers in class to address the needs of migrant students – for instance to hire extra staff, to purchase teaching materials and professionalise teaching staff (Koehler et al., 2018; Van Maele and Poeze, 2018). Also, a lack of finances means projects targeting adult newcomers are short-lived. Moreover, in societies that organise separate reception education classes, effective language support is often lacking after the transition to mainstream secondary education (Van Maele and Poeze, 2018).

Teachers play a pivotal and multidimensional role in students' lives since they transmit new knowledge, are key in their socialisation and part of their adult networks. However, a lack of trust is particularly the case in schools with a high share of migrant and socio-economic disadvantaged youth (Van Maele, Van Houtte and Forsyth, 2014), and experiences of ethnic discrimination – or the mere perception thereof – have a negative impact on teacher-student relationships (Van Maele and Poeze, 2018). This may also have a negative impact on students' motivation for school, self-esteem, and support networks. Research also shows teachers are more likely to have lower expectations regarding learning capabilities for migrant students (Van Maele and Van Houtte, 2011), which has a negative impact on the educational performance of these students (Heckmann, 2008). In addition, teachers more often direct migrant students to a lower track, whereas they let native-born students with similar results repeat a grade (Unia, 2018).

These findings can be explained by a general lack of knowledge and understanding about migrant students' ethnic and cultural background, stereotypical thinking, and a general feeling of preparedness and training to teach in an ethnic diverse context that characterises European teaching staff to date (Koehler et al., 2018; Siarova and Tudjman, 2018).

Within schools, students may also be confronted with ethnic discrimination or victimisation from peers. For instance, these children are being called racist names or are bluntly ordered to **“go back to the country you came from”**, but it may also be less explicit when unspoken tensions arise. Not surprisingly, these situations have a profound impact on their wellbeing and sense of school belonging (D'hondt, Van Houtte and Stevens, 2015). At the school level, plenty can be done to tackle educational barriers for students with a migrant background. This can be done through inclusive school policies translated into concrete actions and training of teaching staff about ethnic and cultural diversity at school.

Other positive steps are to create diversity within the teaching staff, as well as the exchange of good practices between schools and within school teams. A more inclusive school context also includes culturally sensitive teaching materials, textbooks, curriculum, and classrooms with respect for the ethnic and culturally diverse backgrounds of the students (Van Maele and Poeze, 2018). There is also a need for more opportunities to improve the language skills beyond the school walls, not only for young newcomers, but also for higher educated and more advanced learners. Crucially, there seems to be a lack of coordination, communication and collaboration between schools and community organisations that characterises the gap between the social and educational domains (Van Maele and Poeze, 2018).

Systemic level

Many factors that hinder migrant students to maximise their full educational potential are related to the systemic level. These are often above and beyond the control of the individual student, their family, and the school staff.⁸ Access to education is key to the successful educational integration of newcomers.

Yet, different factors delay access to education especially for refugees, such as frequent moves, difficulties in finding a school that accepts them, complex and lengthy administrative procedures, and distant and rural locations of reception centres with a lack of frequent and affordable public services (Koehler and Schneider, 2019; Refugee Support Network, 2018; Van Maele and Poeze, 2018). Obstacles to enter adult and higher education include legal status issues, difficulties recognising diplomas from countries in the Global South (low and middle-income countries located in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean), financial barriers as well as language requirements (Koehler and Schneider, 2019).

Tracking systems in secondary education where children follow a certain route that often determines their options for future education also disadvantages students with a migration background and newcomers specifically. Because of language barriers latecomers are more likely to be streamed into lower qualifying tracks that does not always comply with their actual capacities, which consequently increases the risk of early school leaving (Koehler and Schneider, 2019). School segregation across the 2 Seas region is pronounced, meaning students with a migrant background are concentrated in disadvantaged and underachieving schools. These schools are usually located in the poor neighbourhoods where many of the migrant students reside (OECD, 2019c). This is problematic since such schools tend to offer a lower quality of education (European Union, 2013).

How schools deal with a child's home language that is not the language of instruction also has an impact on pupils. In the 2 Seas region, the use of the students' home language is usually limited to instrumental use, meaning they can only use it to improve the language of instruction (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2019). In some cases, such as in Flanders, Belgium, migrant students are even prohibited to speak their home language on the school premises. This can spark tensions between students and teachers (Unia, 2018).

⁸ The SIREE project focused on challenges that could be tackled by actions developed in co-creation with parents, students, school staff, external partners and implemented on the school or local level (Van Maele and Poeze, 2018). Nonetheless, to understand the complex interplay of obstructing factors on different levels, we have also mentioned factors that are relevant on the systemic level.

Despite all these hardships and obstacles, we may also be cautiously optimistic about some positive results. While students with migrant background still fall behind in reading scores compared to native-born students, their performance rates have increased considerably over the past 10 years (OECD, 2019b). Moreover, many students with a migrant background can overcome obstacles and excel academically. For instance, in the UK, more than one in eight disadvantaged students scored in the top quarter of reading performance.

These positive results - despite the many obstacles - is evidence of the students' high educational aspirations, great drive and motivation and supporting parents (OECD, 2019c). There are many good practices found within schools such as building positive relationships with parents by calling upon their skills, letting them do small tasks in the school, or opening the doors of the classroom and the school to parents. Support from members of migrant communities and community liaison officers also help build bridges between schools, and parents and students. The partnerships between schools, community organisations and local governments should be highlighted as positive ways to engage all involved.

Nonetheless, despite the cautiously positive results, a great deal of work remains to be done to realise equal educational opportunities and minimise the challenges. How schools respond to these issues is of paramount importance, and inclusive education that fosters equal educational opportunities is crucial. Education is an important emancipating tool that enables people to participate as active citizens in the societies they live in, to integrate in the labour market, and to let their self-esteem grow, but it also has benefits for society at large as it helps reduce poverty and increases economic growth (UNCHR, 2016).

Reality, however, shows that the road towards inclusive education is long and bumpy. Whereas many teachers are motivated to adapt to the needs of the children and their families, it proves difficult to know exactly what changes are needed. One of the mistakes made, though usually stemming from good intentions, is that school staff often search for answers from their own frame of reference.

They do this while leaving the voice – and thereby the needs – of the most vulnerable students and their families unheard. In other words, solutions are sought but not with newcomers. This often results in frustrations and disillusionment among school staff when implemented actions have no effect. There is thus a need to gain insight into the wants and challenges of the target group. Yet the voice of parents and students, especially those with a newcomer background is generally not heard in school decision-making processes.

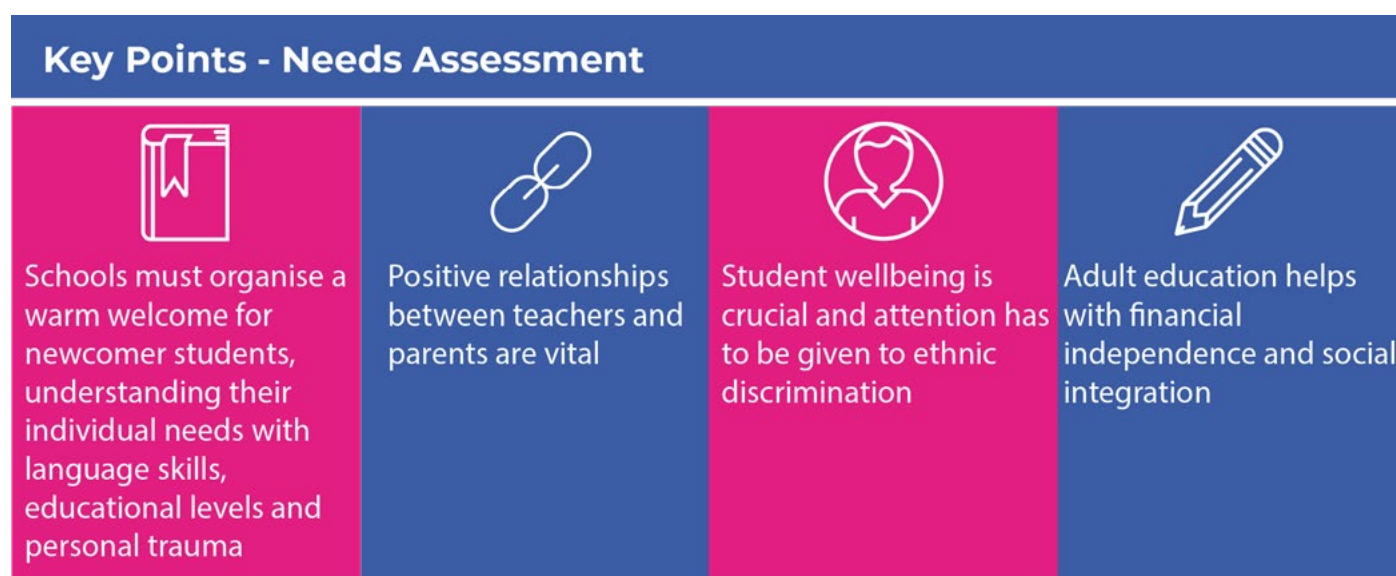
Generally, school staff only communicate with parents during formal occasions, such as parent-teacher meetings and the target group rarely has a voice within school councils. Nonetheless, the need to integrate the voices of those with a newcomer background is crucial to define and tackle existing challenges, but also to give the target group a sense of ownership and belonging. One of the most vital aspects is to make them feel heard, as was poignantly illustrated by a student's reaction to an invitation for the LCs:

*"Why should we participate in the Learning Community?
They never listen to us anyway."*

Student, secondary school, Belgium.

The SIREE project aimed to fill this void by creating spaces where students and parents with migration backgrounds were invited to actively participate in the process of “school making” as they entered into dialogue with school staff and external parties. Facilitating dialogue in a superdiverse setting is crucial for many reasons, not least to find and better understand each other, but also to search for a common goal.

The LCs installed in the partner regions, explained in the remainder of this chapter, were spaces where different actors that included the target group were invited to propose new and innovative actions to make the school a space where they felt welcome and accepted. Done in co-creation the focus was to ensure obstacles to their educational success could be overcome. The next sections detail the methodological framework and organisation of the co-creative LCs, as they took shape in real life during this project.



2.3 Methodologies - Co-creative Learning Communities (LCs)

2.3.1 Design thinking

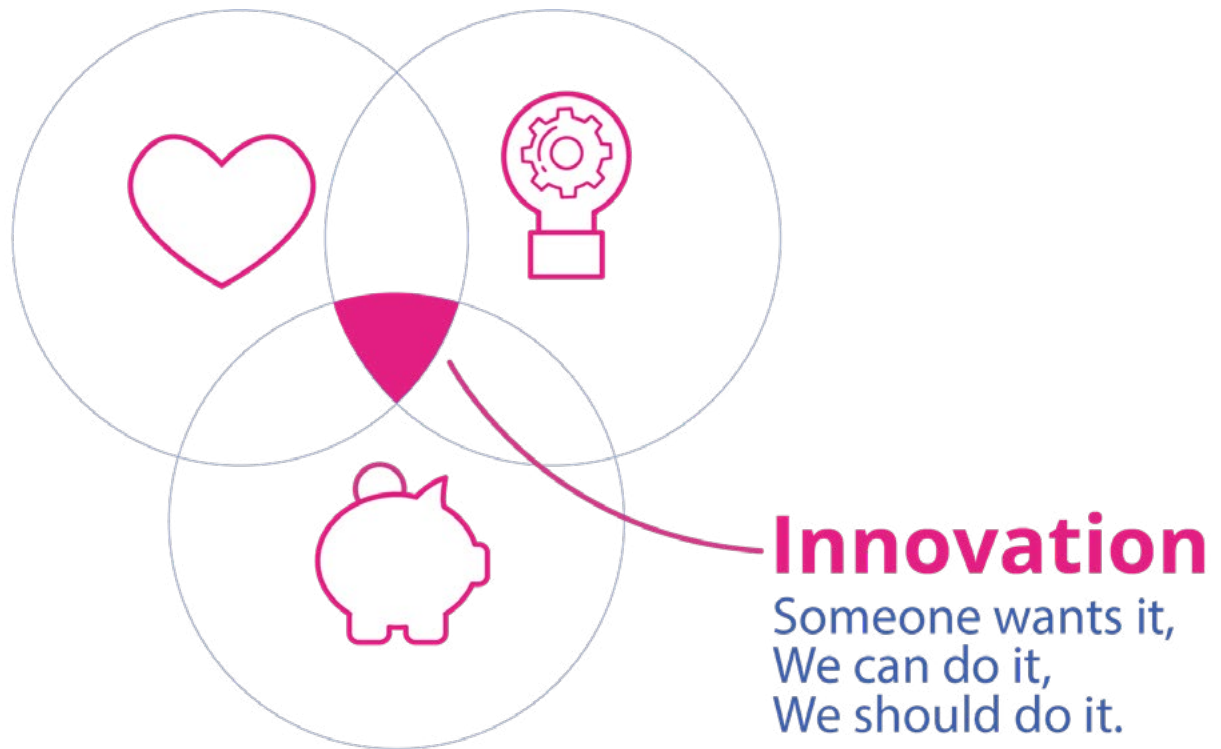
The myth of innovation is that brilliant ideas leap fully formed from the minds of geniuses. The reality is that most innovations come from a process of rigorous examination through which great ideas are identified and developed before being realized as new offerings and capabilities.

Tim Brown, 2019.

The logic behind the LCs stems from the design thinking model, which is a human-centred approach to innovation. In the case of educational integration of people with a migrant background, this means considering the needs of different actors. This includes migrant parents and students, teachers, school staff, as well as external partners, who are integrated with what is possible within a school context and the requirements for quality education.

Hence, the design thinking approach brings together what is desirable from a human point of view with what is feasible and viable. When these three elements overlap, we can speak of innovation as illustrated in **Figure 2.3**. This approach allows people who are not trained as designers to use creative tools to address a vast range of challenges (Brown, 2019).

Figure 2.3: Schematic overview of the innovative elements of design thinking.
Source: Naude (2019)



 **Desirability** something someone wants.

 **Feasibility** something we are able to do.

 **Viability** something that makes sense.

2.3.2 The Double Diamond and co-creation

The Double Diamond is one of the best known and most used visual techniques of the process of design thinking, and a methodological co-creative approach that tackles complex problems to arrive at positive changes. Participation, collaboration, and innovation are at its core. The two diamonds are part of the same cyclical process where you move between the **exploration phase** that sheds light on the general themes and specific topics participants discussed in the LCs, and the **execution diamond** providing insights for opportunities and challenges for action in LCs when implemented in an educational setting with newcomers.

Within each diamond a phase of diverging, e.g. coming up with numerous problems (diamond 1) or solutions (diamond 2) is followed by a phase of converging, that is deciding on the problem to tackle (diamond 1) or the solutions to be tested (diamond 2). There are four separate phases of the Double Diamond – Discover, Define, Develop and Deliver – where a challenge is transformed into a positive change and solution (see **Figure 2.4**):

- **Discover:** the first diamond starts with a quest to fully understand the issue. It is about hearing all the voices involved and being open to different perspectives on the problem. In this phase, people work in a divergent or creative manner.
- **Define:** the broad insights gained from discovering the problem are now used to frame the challenge in a different, clear, and more in-depth way. In this phase, people work convergent or with logic.
- **Develop:** the second diamond starts with people providing various and inspiring ideas on how to answer the clearly defined problem. This phase we work divergent.
- **Deliver:** in the final phase, people develop, implement, and evaluate selected solutions to the defined problem. In this phase, people work convergent.

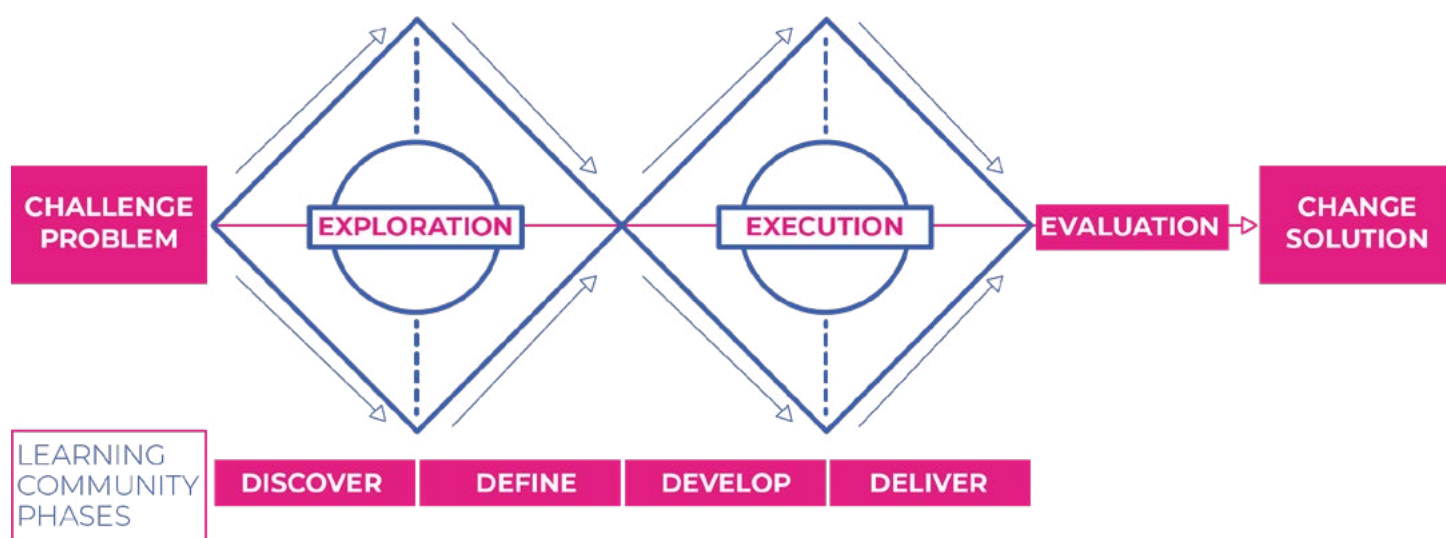


Figure 2.4: The process of design thinking following the Double Diamond approach.

Inherent in design thinking is the concept of co-creation, which means a group of diverse people work together to create a solution to an existing problem. The collective creativity of the group is stimulated to arrive at an innovative solution that was unknown at the beginning of the process. This also means it is a process that cannot be predicted or predetermined beforehand.

2.3.3 Learning Communities (LCs)

One of the central questions we sought to find answers to in the education section of the SIREE project is how the social and economic integration of pupils and parents with a migrant background could be strengthened. We actively worked on steps that would increase engagement in the education process and the wider school community.

To answer this important question, seven partners in the four countries installed over 50 LCs that built on the design thinking approach⁹.

A Learning Community (LC) can be roughly described as *"a group of people with a common interest or engagement whose goal is to learn from each other through the concept of give and take..."* (Drijkoningen, 2012). An LC can take many forms, for example starting or ending as a somewhat looser network, with people from different groups, organisations and individuals not belonging to any group. In our case, each LC was linked to a specific educational institution that worked towards tackling barriers facing migrant background pupils and parents, with the aim of evolving towards a more inclusive learning environment.

Each LC consisted of people with a migrant background, with parents, pupils, students and some members of the school team, as well as external partners joining when their presence was deemed relevant. The participants worked together during the project to exchange ideas, come up with solutions and introduce new and innovative ways of working. The starting point of an LC is not a predetermined project plan that has to be implemented, but instead the involvement in a common subject and need for change. First and foremost is the sharing of knowledge and renewal and improvement of working methods, products and a certain approach. The actual change takes place on different domains (Revans, 1982), with:

- 1) A change in the relationship to the outside world – society (**we**)
- 2) A change in the relationship to themselves (**I**)
- 3) A relationship in relation to "others" (**you**)



In the SIREE project, the LCs were firstly built on the **reciprocal exchange of experiences and perspectives between parents/pupils/students and school staff**, secondly their **active participation**, and lastly the **inclusion of three levels of change**. Actions at the level of the classroom have an impact on the school and vice versa. The LCs aimed to get to know each perspective better, to work out what was meaningful and enriching to the different parties involved, which can then be embedded in the school and/or wider local context.

⁹ Over the course of the project a few schools have stopped the cooperation.

In the SIREE project, the LCs had a diverse set-up and included groups with:

- Parents with a migrant background of children from pre-primary, primary and secondary school
- Teaching staff only in pre-primary, primary and secondary school
- Newcomer pupils and pupils with a migrant background in secondary school
- Students of migrant background in adult and higher education

Within secondary education a variety of school types were covered:

- Reception education
- Vocational education
- Technical education
- Special education

Ideally within the LCs there is no hierarchy; every person is equally important and every contribution counts. In practice however, pre-existing power relationships infiltrate the LCs. For instance, schools have the final decision in what is and is not implemented and in the early phase of the process especially, parents and students may be uncertain about the repercussions when they voice criticism about the school. It is important to be aware of these power dynamics especially when working with vulnerable people.

The facilitator plays an important role in preparing and organising the meeting. The varied tasks of the facilitator include sending out invitations, finding a suitable meeting room, as well as catering and preparing the session. Duties also include summarising the previous meeting, choosing working methods, and ensuring everyone feels comfortable to create group cohesion during and in between meetings. Making sure every voice is heard is vital, and this can be helped by introducing translation solutions. The facilitator is also in charge of evaluating the process of the LCs. Within the SIREE project, partner organisations took up the role of facilitator, sometimes supported by external actors with expertise in design thinking or participation of vulnerable groups. It is also vital to have one or more school staff representatives or external parties during the sessions, who can make the bridge with the wider community including social partners, educational ambassadors, or liaison officers.

2.3.4 Learning from the Learning Community (LC) logs

After each LC meeting a logbook is filled in by the facilitator. The main topics include:

- Starting situation
- Participants (number, who is who?)
- Goals of the meeting
- Themes
- Methodology
- What was learnt? Decisions and actions
- Communication

In a second document the “co-creation score” is examined. Topics include:

- Openness to new ideas and opinions
- Exchange of useful information
- Equal level of commitment
- Climate of trust and openness
- Relevant discussions
- Positive atmosphere
- Generating new insights
- Enthusiasm of participants
- Clear collective mission
- Equal influence on decisions
- Respectful interactions
- Efficient decision-making and problem-solving
- Satisfaction with progress
- Use of understandable language

The information from the logs was accurately tracked, measured, and followed up to note trends, participants, and co-creation scores¹⁰. In addition, when an LC comes up with a real action – big or small – an action plan template is filled in to keep track of the preparations, process, and evaluation (see Appendix 2.1). The facilitator of the LCs was responsible for filling in the documents, and in some schools the action plan template was completed with participants in an appeal for shared responsibility and to create a feeling of ownership.

Figure 2.5: *Main figures of the LCs.*

REALISED LEARNING COMMUNITIES AND SESSIONS

- 52** Learning Communities were implemented in collaboration with educational institutions
- 443** Learning Communities Sessions were installed
- 8** On average **eight** were installed across a Learning Community

PARTICIPANTS AT THE LEARNING COMMUNITIES

- 2412** participants were attending the Learning Communities
- 944** target group members (**refugee/migrant parents and students**) were participating
 - 198** R/M parents
 - 746** R/M (adult) students
- 934** Non-R/M parents and students
- 482** members of school staff were attending
- 52** externals were involved
- 7.5** An average attendance of **7.5 participants** per session at a Learning Community

¹⁰ The logs were only filled in during the first project year. One year was long enough to come full circle with the design thinking approach and given the large number of sessions, saturation was arrived at for a thorough analysis.

Evaluation of the process and added value of the LCs were carried out during partner meetings and interviews with facilitators, as well as relevant participants and school personnel during the second project year (see section 2.8). In collaboration with educational institutions in the Netherlands, Flanders (Belgium), the UK and France, 52 LCs were installed between January 2019 and March 2021¹¹. **Figure 2.5** sums up the LCs' vital numbers.

The following section describes the progress of the LCs, derived from a content analysis on structured log sheet reports of its sessions until March 2020. It provides a much deeper understanding of the process of the LCs in an educational setting with a vulnerable target group, which includes revealing the facilitating factors as well as impediments to dynamic and co-creative sessions. The findings also inspire us to learn the possible actions we can take within this setting. For tips and tricks to support the participation of vulnerable people in LCs we refer to the dissemination guide.



2.4 Organising Learning Communities (LCs) and facilitating co-creation in an educational context

2.4.1 One method, different approaches

As mentioned in section 2.3, the LCs were based on the framework of the Double Diamond – this co-creative approach was integrated across the sessions that were held in a specific LC. The first and last two phases of the Double Diamond were combined to outline a mindset for facilitators during the organisation of the LCs: **Exploration and Execution**.

¹¹ The reporting period does not run parallel to the period over which the LC sessions are carried out. The sessions were held until December 2020 or June 2021, depending on the engagement and progress of the school.

Exploration: in the specific context of the school or local community, the first diamond is about fully understanding the real problems that newcomers encounter and about agreeing on which challenge to proceed with priority.

Execution: the second diamond involves participants who create an optimal solution and take responsibility to act on a real change for the better.

Evaluating the existing process helped reveal necessary adjustments for the smooth organisation, implementation, and facilitation of future sessions and sustainable changes. After several LC sessions, three ways to organise them were found by the project partners:

- 1) LCs sessions that were monthly or bi-monthly organised.** This aligns with a frequent but modest presence of the facilitator in the educational setting to which the LC is connected. In this approach the facilitator works as a kind of external consultant to the school and the LC participants. This type was applied to the majority of LCs.
- 2) LCs that did not depart from the school context, but rather from the wider local community.** In these cases, facilitators worked from the local community with the school as they convinced parents or pupils with a migrant background to participate in LC sessions in the neighbourhood schools. In this approach the facilitator can be perceived as a kind of community development leader. This approach was most common in LCs within the UK, but also appeared among one of the LCs from ARhus, in Belgium. It was mainly applied due to the better connections with community development agencies, and the difficulties experienced reaching the target group within the schools.
- 3) Intensive and weekly presence of the facilitator within the schools.** In this way a clear picture of the context was gained, and it allowed for more time to build a rapport with the participants and the school team. In this approach, the facilitator acts as a kind of liaison inside the school. The downside of this approach is that – all resources being equal – a lower number of LCs can be served and facilitated. This way was applied in the LCs of the Belgian city of Mechelen and at ARhus.

2.4.2 The different phases of the Double Diamond

Ways of facilitating co-creation in LCs in an educational setting with vulnerable parents and students is crucial to ensure continued participation. Methodological session approaches that were particularly beneficial to the process included:

- **Icebreakers:** acquainted participants and the facilitator with one another to foster trust between them
- **Exit slips:** briefly rounded up a session and motivated participants to join next time
- **Group formation:** randomly divided participants into small working groups
- **Session evaluations:** captured the participants perceived usefulness of a session

These approaches help to facilitate co-creation throughout the whole LC process. Examples of specific tools that were developed in the context of the SIREE project are presented in the online toolbox (see section 2.9.1), and tips on how to facilitate co-creation within a single session can be found in the dissemination guide. Next we discuss the features for each phase of the Double Diamond, with analysis based on the log sheets.

Discover:

During the first phase of the Double Diamond, the participants uncover the specific needs in the individual school context for which a solution must be found. The facilitator stimulates divergent thinking to come up with a wide range of challenges for the integration of students and parents with a migrant background in an educational setting.

It is important that everybody keeps an open mind and tries to think “outside of the box” to share their insights on what the real problems are to them. This can be based on their own experiences or what they have seen or heard from others.

In some of the LCs the groups started with a single target audience, either pupils, students, teachers, or parents, while others immediately brought several groups together. Either way, it is vital that the methods used, and questions raised, brought to the surface a broad range of insights into the challenge.

The key questions considered during this LC phase were:

- What are the challenges and opportunities?
- What is the real problem?
- Who are the stakeholders and for what reason?

The methodological session approaches during the first diamond’s divergent phase include:

- **Getting to know one another and building a rapport:** Within the first session(s), all participants and the facilitator(s) need to get acquainted with each other, certainly when they take up a different role in the educational setting
- **Analysing the challenges and opportunities at play:** Take the time to analyse with the participants, in various ways and perspectives, the challenge or problem to understand its complexity
- **Searching for background information and conducting research:** Various research approaches during a session, but also in between sessions, allow to get a clear and sharp view on all matters that affect the challenge under discussion

Define:

The first phase resulted in a wide range of needs and challenges presented. Since it was impossible to work on all the issues the participants applied convergent thinking and chose which challenge or need to tackle. This was done by letting participants think about and define what is realistic and feasible, a priority, and/or what will have the greatest return. The other topics are “on hold” and can be brought out for a subsequent cycle.

The key drivers which underpinned this LC phase were:

- What is urgent to change and important?
- What is the expected return?
- What is realistic to tackle?

The define phase thus consists of the following steps:

- **Topic prioritisation:** The various needs and challenges that came out of the discover phase is valued in terms of its priority to tackle issues by the participants
- **Topic elaboration:** If needed, participants can get a better understanding of one or more needs
- **Topic selection:** When all topics have been explored in depth, the participants select a specific challenge or subproblem to work on during the next phases

Develop:

When the participants have identified and agreed on a specific challenge or need, it is time to develop an appropriate solution. The focus in this phase is to come up with as many solutions as possible by applying divergent thinking.

For the develop phase, the leading considerations are:

- What are opportunities for action?
- What are real restrictions for action?

The develop phase consists of the following steps:

- **Idea generation:** The participants come up with as many ideas as possible that could lead to resolving the chosen challenge
- **Topic elaboration:** It sometimes is desirable to learn more about the challenge to know what is and is not feasible before action
- **Idea selection:** The participants decide together on which idea to elaborate in order to develop and implement the action

Deliver:

The participants are now ready to select the most feasible and realistic solution to the identified challenge and to implement this. The participants employ convergent thinking to narrow down their ideas for action. The chosen action will be properly and, preferably, quickly implemented. Each implementation of an action should be directly followed by an evaluation of the action, so that feedback from those affected can help improve the action.

The key drivers which underpin this LC phase can be summarised as:

- What will we do?
- Who will do what?
- When will we do this?
- When is the action successful?

The delivery phase consists of the following steps:

- **Action development:** The participants take the necessary steps to prepare the idea, and develop the action
- **Action implementation:** The action is conducted, and also implemented together with the participants
- **Action evaluation:** The action is evaluated, and adjustments are made where considered necessary

Figures 2.6 and 2.7 sum up the key drivers and methodological session approaches for the phases of the Double Diamond.

Figure 2.6: Key drivers of each phase of the Double Diamond.

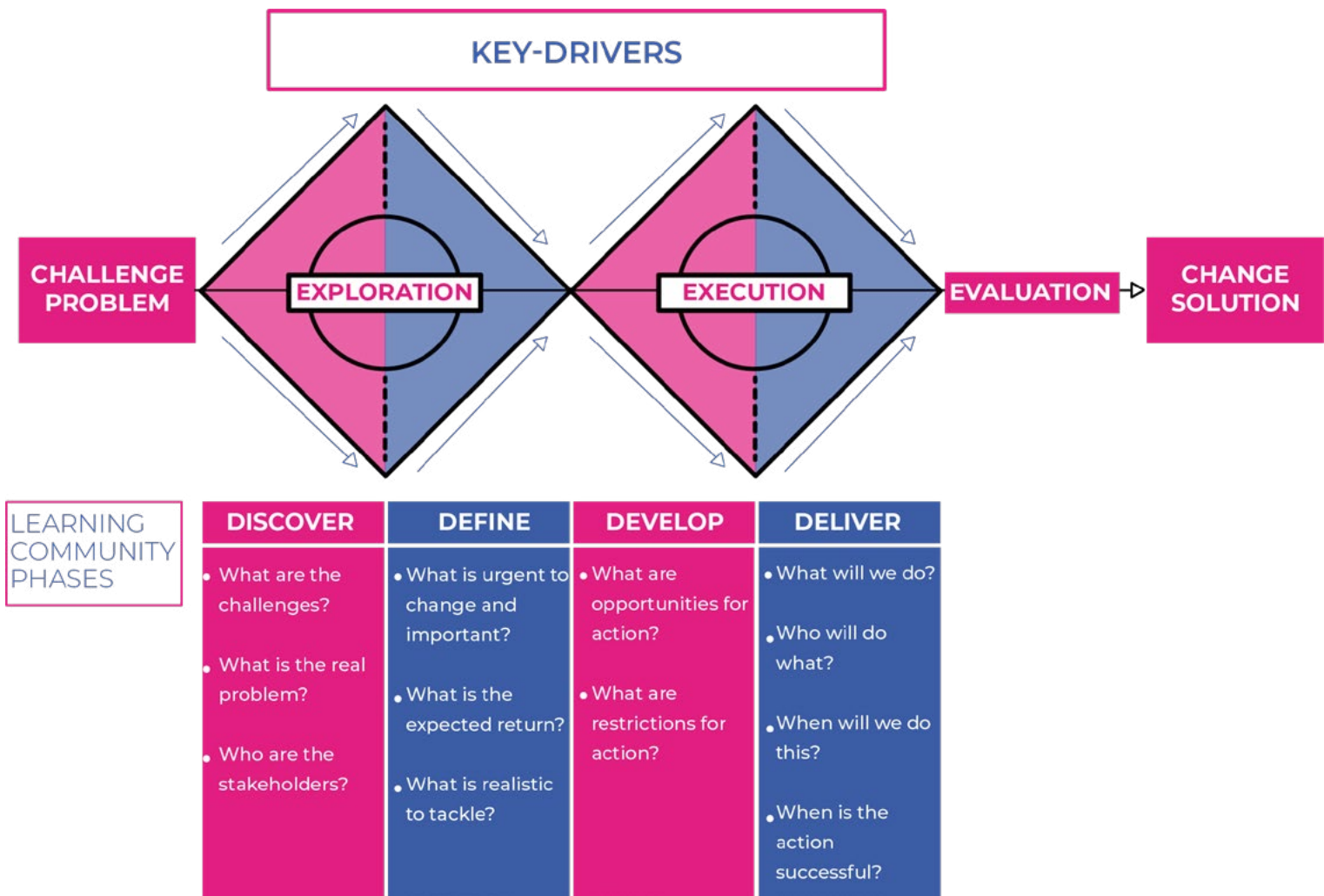
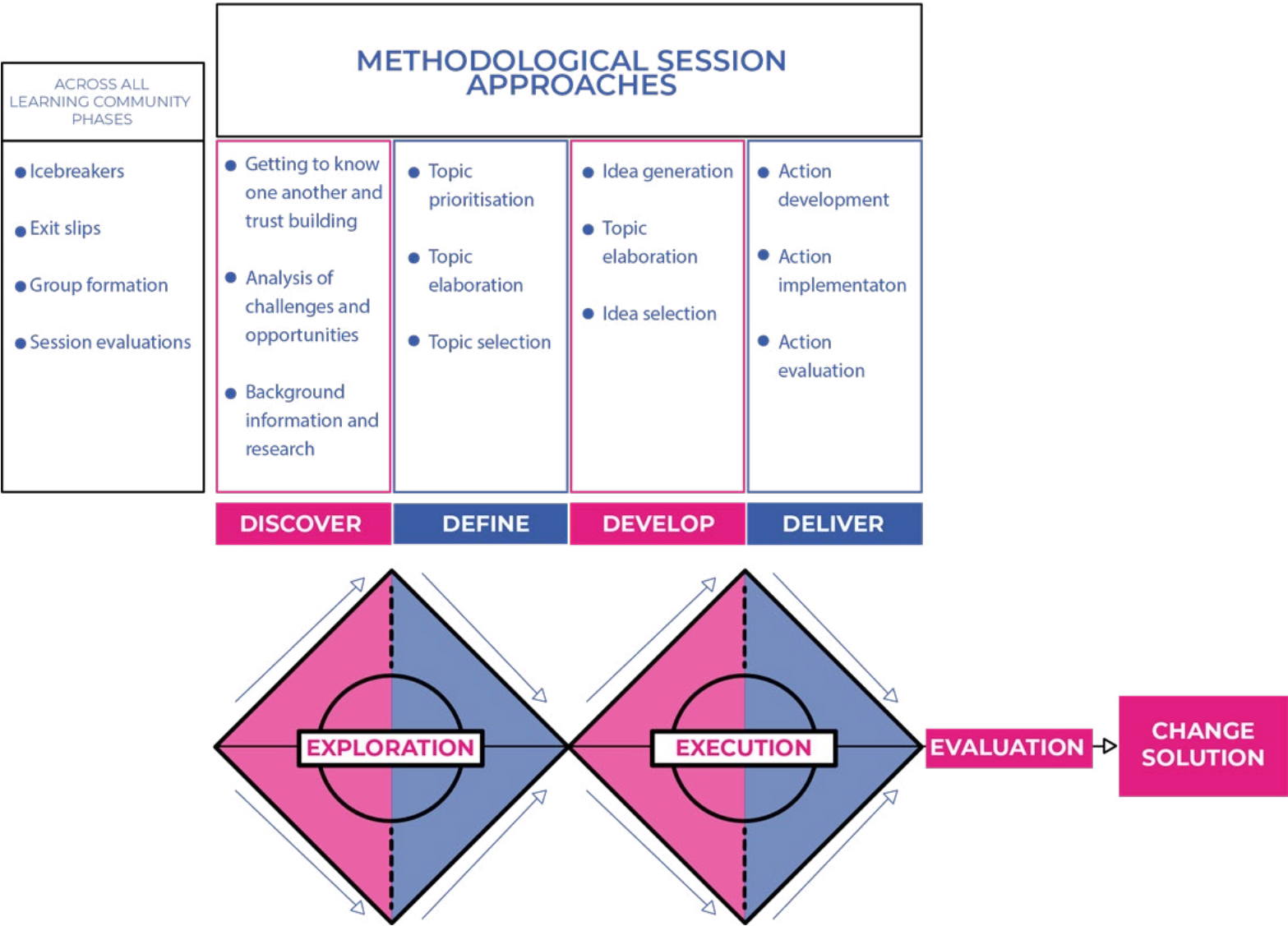


Figure 2.7: Methodological session approaches of each phase of the Double Diamond.



CASE STUDY:

AN EXAMPLE OF TAKING TIME TO RUN THROUGH THE DISCOVERY PHASE AND WORKING UP TO THE DELIVERY PHASE

Liaison inside the school: Supporting action development with a stable group of parents

School type: Primary education

Country: Belgium

SIREE partner organisation: City of Mechelen

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Abeel School is a small, multicultural educational institution situated in a social housing neighbourhood (Gandhi district) in Mechelen, and is a branch of the primary school Maurits Sabbe. It has a high percentage of **“indicator students”** (over 90%) designated due to, for example, the mother’s low level of education or because they receive an education allowance. The migration background of parents is diverse and Moroccan parents are highly represented. Many parents are not familiar with Dutch, and have a lower economic status. The school reports some bottlenecks related to the diverse background of pupils, in for example music classes and school visits in which boys and girls are mixed.

INSTALLING THE FIRST LEARNING COMMUNITY (LC)

Before setting up the first LC, ideas and expectations were exchanged with the school board and guidance counsellor. **Transparency** and **honest communication** were considered of vital importance for success, meaning all parties should be free to openly express their concerns to work constructively. Teachers were informed about the objectives of the project by the board, and the facilitator of the city of Mechelen, by being present at the school twice a week, gained the trust of teachers and the board.

She helped create the collaborative network with the partners, Samenlevingsopbouw (Community Development), Het Huis van het Kind (House of the Child) and the J@M child and teenager work group. Expanding the school’s network with these partners remains essential for the continuity and viability of the project. Parents were informally invited at the school gates one month before the start of the LCs, and the J@M group, located near the school, helped with distribution of flyers. This required quite some work but was ultimately a good way for the facilitator to meet the parents. Also, in the school corridors and on parent-teacher night, the facilitator was given the opportunity to introduce herself and explain the purpose of the SIREE project. These informal moments by the start of the first LC ensured most people had heard about the project, making it quite an intensive approach but certainly worthwhile in the end.

The LCs were held in the teachers’ lounge with free coffee and tea. When we first started, we noticed both the parents and teachers were not accustomed to this form of contact. At the beginning, some parents remained standing to make space for teachers, but gradually more chairs were added. Both parents and teachers were given the opportunity to get to know each other. They entered into a dialogue which encouraged a kind of mutual respect.

A bond was created in these brief but valuable meetings between parents and teachers when talking about topics such as fears and conflicts between students, as they worked towards the same goal of the future of their children. In the first session, we started with a group of nine parents, where we used the icebreaker of the ideal dream school tool.

Each parent, working in pairs, discussed their dream school. They were asked to explain drawings they created and through these the most important community needs were outlined, so we could then devise concrete actions. **The key topics mentioned within the LCs were education, communication, homework, and an open school culture.**

PROGRESS OF THE SESSIONS

Parents were quite diverse in terms of education levels: some were illiterate, others only able to write in their own language and some were not used to using a pen. The ages of the mainly female participants varied between 28 and 48, and included those with Maghrebian, Russian, Iraqi, and Belgian roots. New parents were encouraged to join by teachers, the guidance counsellor, and through word of mouth. Some mothers were also invited by the city's Community Development team that joined our sessions after a few months via the school start-up project. Some had to leave the group due to pregnancy or relocation.

The role of the facilitator is crucial within the LCs. The facilitator had a migration background that lowered certain barriers for parents, as she could talk to them in their mother tongue. An advantage was she could frame and emphasise the added value of the project to parents, and this created connectedness and made them feel at ease. With these weekly sessions, the parents were given the chance to quickly become part of the group. This enabled us to begin a process, develop activities and create a school policy that would be wholly supported by the parents. The sessions were also translated for the whole group.

It was great to see how parents really began to feel at ease in the teachers' lounge after several LCs. The need to whisper during the sessions disappeared, and they gradually felt empowered and dared to ask questions. As a group, they were given a chance to participate in how the school is run and their opinions mattered. This was a key incentive for many parents to continue to attend sessions. Ideas were exchanged and implemented, and together we were able to contribute to school policy, which was not always easy.

Sometimes the attendance rate was low. We reminded parents about the LC sessions via WhatsApp. During one session, only three partners were present and none of the parents. A guidance counsellor linked this to an arts and craft activity. According to her, the parents had no interest in joining this activity without discussing their interests. Next to the content or programme of a LC, some statements could provoke indignation or friction among the parents, teachers, and partners.

Another situation that created friction were prejudices and misconceptions towards parents. Some of the parents had to move to a new house within a social housing district. This had impact on the attendance rate and provoked prejudices that they would only come if there was gain for themselves.

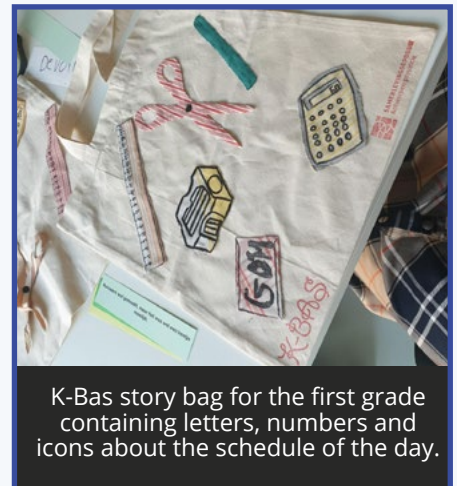
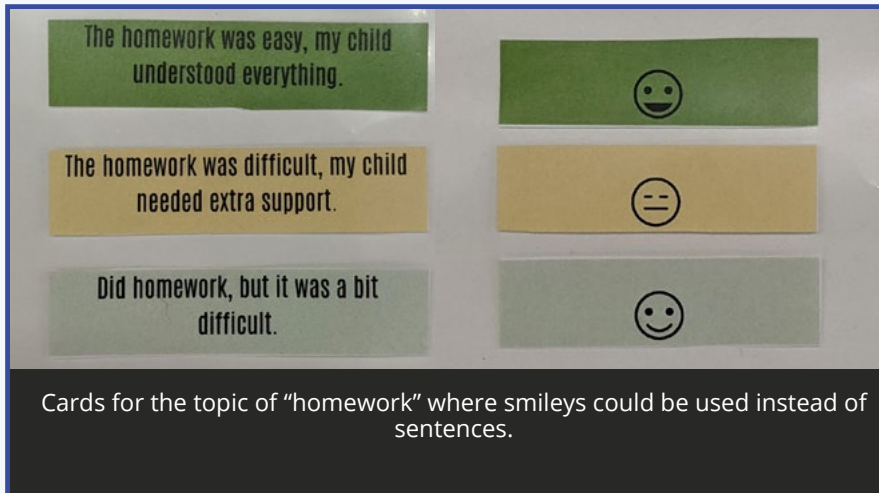
Everybody is looking from their own perspective towards a situation. At such moments, listening and reformulating goals are crucial to re-create a shared context. At the first session after the incident, we asked parents about the frequency and quality of the previous sessions. Together, we then decided that no one wanted to reduce the frequency of the sessions. This open and clear communication with all partners is vital. **Only by continuing to hold an open dialogue during these sessions were we able to build up trust and create an equal partnership.**

ACTIONS

Action 1: K-Bas - story bags

The story bags included the parents' valuable experiences, expectations, and concerns. During the sessions, the educational themes inside the bags were chosen and compiled by parents, and included healthy food, homework, school and parents, potty training and the smooth transition to kindergarten.

The bags helped provide a means to actively contribute to school policy, and were financed and jointly made possible by our valued partner, the city's Community Development team.



We started using the K-Bas story bags also in cooperation with the House of the Child organisation and J@M. Due to the Covid-19 virus, some bags were made by students and one of the partner organisations.

Action 2: Vegetable market and fruit distribution

In February 2020, together with Ecoso VZW, the city of Mechelen started the Foodsavers food distribution platform. This platform was founded to support social organisations and initiatives that provide food support in various ways. During the weekly meetings with the parents, we decided to start up a vegetable market and fruit distribution programme. On the days of the sessions, the city (via Foodsavers) distributed snacks, vegetables, and fruit. Parents peeled the fruits to later distribute in classrooms, where they had never previously visited. The school, parents and facilitators were convinced this contributed to bridge the gap between parents and the school.



Parents cut fruit to serve in a bowl to pupils, and a vegetable market at the school.

Action 3: Socratic method

Only pupils participated in the Socratic method, where children were seated in a circle and a subject is chosen in advance. The following themes were mentioned – halal, haram and friendship – this method stimulated pupils to exercise self-reflection and a critical attitude with the ultimate goal being to encourage children to seek answers to social problems on their own. A goal was to anchor this method within school lessons.



Action 4: Playground policy

The unattractive playground and the conflicts that take place there gave a reason to re-evaluate playground policy. This shared concern became a point of action where parents, students and teachers all participated. Due to the Covid-19 virus, the teachers and managing board were not able to choose one of the playground designs created. The following pictures show drawings related to the pupils' ideal design of the playground.

2.4.3 Co-creation flow

The LC process is not a straightforward one, and facilitators experienced this also. After each session, they were asked to report on the level of co-creation, which is clearly crucial for progress and to keep all parties involved and alert in the LCs. Fourteen statements were derived from the co-creation tool as developed within the Accomplish project (Vandael et al., 2018), and they were combined to form a five-point scale with a higher score indicating a greater level of perceived co-creation.

The responses show variation in the level of co-creation:

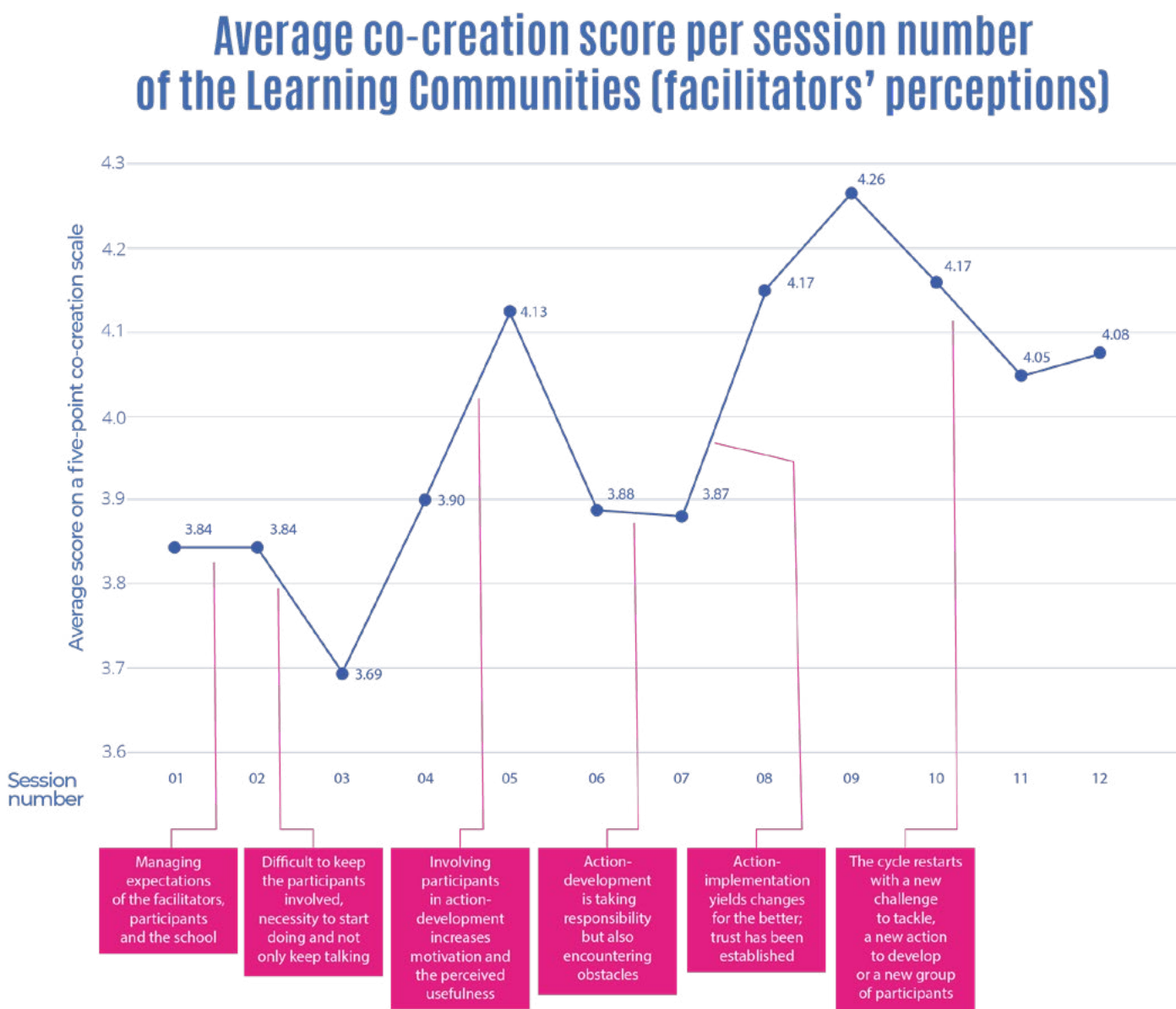


Figure 2.8: Evolution of average co-creation scores per session.

- The first two sessions were reported as scoring average in terms of co-creation. This can be interpreted as the fact that all people involved and/or affected by a LC need to manage expectations and get to know one another
- A drop occurred between session two and three. The facilitators experienced difficulties to keep participants involved. It was also usually the time when the process moved from the discover phase to the define or develop phase. Hence, instead of a discussion about the needs, it was now time to think about action

- Yet, after three sessions, the general co-creation scores increased. This may indicate that once participants are involved in developing actions, their motivation increases
- Developing an action is not always easy. It means encountering obstacles and having participants take up responsibilities, so things get done. This could explain the general drop in the co-creation scores between sessions five and seven
- From developing an action to executing it results in a rise of the co-creation score. This could be explained by the fact the participants and facilitators see positive change occur
- Several LCs altered after about seven to nine sessions: they had a new challenge to tackle or a new action to develop, and/or a new group of participants joined the LC, for example after the summer holidays. This might explain the drop in the average co-creation score after the ninth session

The evolution in co-creation scores is visualised in **Figure 2.8**. The general evolution in the presented scores shows the level of co-creation may be outside of the facilitator's control, although of course a competent and experienced facilitator may minimise the fluctuations and maximise the co-creation scores.



2.5 Learning Communities (LCs) with students and parents of migrant background in an educational setting

What is needed when organising LCs with students and parents from a migrant background in an educational setting is specific adjustments, and a certain sensitiveness to ensure the needs of this target group are being met and the effectiveness of the LCs is maximised.

The following sections discuss aspects that were identified as key for the process and continuation of the LCs:

- 1) The school as real partner
- 2) Creating an informal setting
- 3) Tackling the language barrier
- 4) Stimulating motivation and participation
- 5) Partnerships with external organisations

The school as real partner

It is of paramount importance the educational institution involved is willing to collaborate, support and participate in the LCs, and that it is open to positive change on different levels of the organisation. This also includes that the school staff should invest ample time – and resources – in the LC. They are the ones who are most of the time in charge of altering the existing situation based on the innovative ideas that are put forward. Ideally, the whole school team is motivated and involved in the project.

They should understand how the project could benefit not only the target group, but also themselves, and school life in general. It is crucial the institution appoints at least one school delegate (preferably more) who is present during the sessions, and acts as a point of contact for the LC facilitator, LC participants, and fellow school staff members. When this is also the person who regularly joins the sessions, they have the task to closely inform the rest of the team about the developments within the LC. In this case it is advisable the facilitator installs one or more separate sessions with a delegation of the school team to record a wider range of experiences and insights on the problems that need to be tackled.



It is however not always easy for one person to keep the rest of the team informed and share in the newly gained insights. As the headmaster of a participating school mentioned, it is not obvious to rotate school staff even though this may be considered the preferred option: *"I think it is necessary to do more to have teachers from pre-primary and primary classes present [in the LCs], but that is not always possible now because [we] have no replacement for their class."*

Schools can also decide to let staff alternate, but of course this has repercussions since the person is not fully aware of what has been said and done in the past. The added value of this approach however became clear in a few of the schools, where teaching staff rotated in the LCs. In these school teams the awareness that the school needs parents has increased, and teachers are less shy or scared to talk to parents (see section 2.8 for a more detailed discussion of the added value of the LCs).

Alternatively, as a primary school teacher mentioned that one teacher could be involved, given they are allowed ample time to focus on the LCs, to make the bridge with the rest of the school team. Some of the LCs had a deployment of community liaison officers, who had pre-existing relationships with the parents. It was their job to make the bridge between parents, the school, and the wider community. Being present in the school between sessions also builds trust among those involved in the LC and helps attain a relatively stable group of participants.

When the school staff do not frequently participate in the LC sessions, it is the task of the facilitator to give regular feedback to the staff. Learning about the process and progress fosters involvement, accountability, and responsibility in the school team. It is advisable to report shortly after a session, through an oral debriefing or written report, to the school leadership to keep them involved and affiliated to the LC, which increases the opportunities to develop and deliver actions for change in a later phase.

Resistance or lack of support by the school concerning LC actions are less likely to occur when they are aligned with already existing school or local projects. It is also recommended to create visibility about the LC in the school or wider community, and involve the local network of people and organisations that either surround the school or work with the target group in the community.

CASE STUDY:

AN EXAMPLE OF INVOLVING THE SCHOOL AS A REAL PARTNER

Getting school staff to focus on parent-teacher relationships

School type: Pre-primary and Primary education

Country: Belgium

SIREE partner organisation: VIVES University of Applied Sciences

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Vrije Basisschool Vlam is a pre-primary and primary Catholic school centrally located in the Barakken, a multicultural suburb of Menen. The school hosts around 200 pupils and has become more diverse over the past decades, and has been struggling with this recent and swift change. The teaching staff has shown great motivation for transformation to address the changing needs of parents and children. For several years, they were actively looking for new ways to improve the relationship with parents, and to have all participate during formal and informal meetings. Their actions had limited success, partly because the school staff developed those actions without consulting the parents themselves.

INSTALLING THE FIRST LEARNING COMMUNITY (LC)

The headteacher was very enthusiastic about SIREE and she wanted us to present the project to the teachers who were excited, but had some concerns regarding the extra time they needed to invest. The headteacher arranged for substitute teachers to take on the duties for participating teachers at the LCs. **Our first LC community session was organised with the entire teaching staff, where we wanted to build on previous experiences – what they had already done to improve the relationship with parents, what worked and what did not.** We also wanted to know from teachers what they perceived to be existing challenges. This helped us to create a support basis among the school staff for future changes. It became clear teachers were particularly struggling with, and felt frustrated about, parents who did not show up during formal and informal meetings.

Other challenges included efficiently sharing information, creating trust relationships with parents, networking with external organisations, and extracurricular parental involvement. For the second LC, the focus was on **dialogue with parents**, and sessions were introduced as “school talks” (schoolbabbels) to emphasise the informal character. The headteacher was present as much as possible, which helped parents feel listened to and gave the signal the school was serious about improving relationships. The liaison officer acted as a bridge between the parents, the school, and the municipality.

To keep the sessions alive, a meeting was scheduled in between two LCs with the headteacher to re-emphasise the possible actions of the previous session and discuss the planning for the next meeting. In this way we ensured we had approval of the school staff about the direction in which we were going. The LCs were scheduled on Friday mornings just before language classes for the parents, meaning they only had to come to the school once. Invitations were handed out a week before sessions, which took place in the centrally located school dining room.

Parents could bring their young children and beverages were available to create an informal and welcoming atmosphere. The first meeting with the parents was mainly about getting to know each other, the project and building trust. We also initiated an exercise where we asked parents to think about what they liked about the school, and what needed to improve. For this exercise we split parents up into two groups, and the Vives facilitators offered to write down their comments – as for some writing in Dutch was too difficult and we suspected others were illiterate.

Positive experiences related to supportive and friendly teachers, the pedagogical vision, activities for the children, the green environment of the school and the ethnic and cultural diversity. Suggestions for improvements included welcoming foreign language-speaking newcomers and making them familiar with school regulations, better information about hot meals and including a halal option, and inviting parents in the school and the class during informal meetings.

PROGRESS OF THE SESSIONS

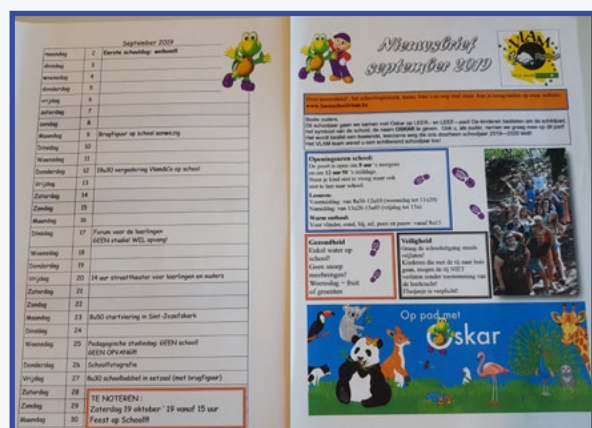
The sessions were organised every two months, and each one would start with a short talk from the headteacher on the previous meeting. She explained once why certain changes were not possible – such as organising a school bus or halal food – and would answer any questions that parents had. This proved to be one of the most important parts of the meetings, especially as time went on and parents felt more secure to voice their concerns, as often there were interesting dialogues about themes not on the agenda. It allowed for a necessary exchange of perspectives and motivated parents to keep showing up because they felt that their voices were heard – even though this did not always result in an actual change. Issues that were discussed during these dialogues were concerns about Islamic

children who had to attend church celebrations, about young boys and girls who had to change their clothes together for gymnastic classes, and unclarities regarding written communication. For the VIVES facilitators this also meant they often had to be flexible to change the agenda on the spot, and to partially let go of what was prepared beforehand.

The LCs focused on themes mentioned by parents or teachers in previous sessions, for example about communication, parental involvement with homework, and language at school and home. The methods used were adjusted to the target group with lots of visual material such as pictures and



Professionally designed invitations were introduced to attract parents.



At the start of the LCs, written communication such as the calendar and newsletters were reviewed for unclarities.

illustrations, and translation of text in the most used languages (Dutch, English, French and Arabic). For non-Dutch speaking parents, we made use of translations by other parents and the facilitators, as well as translation apps. We also made sure to work in small groups, so everybody could be given the chance to voice their opinion. We ensured we did not have a lot on the agenda as progress during the sessions was slow, which mainly resulted from translations that had to be done to keep everybody on board.

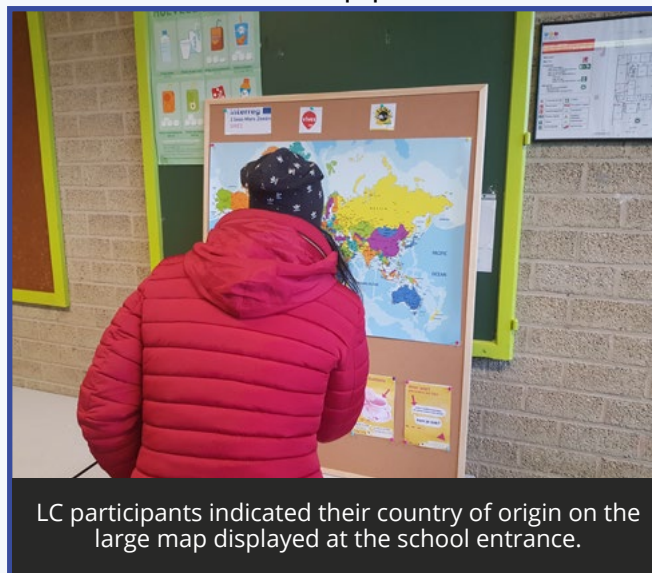
On average there were around 10 to 15 parents present during the LCs. There were sessions during which very few were present, but this mainly had to do with timing – it was Ramadan or just before the holidays. We also noticed after around four or five sessions less parents came, after which we decided to pay more attention to **making the project more visible in the school**.

A small SIREE project corner was created at a central place in the school and professional invitations and posters were designed, which were handed to parents by the Vives facilitator a few days before the next session. On the day itself, one facilitator would approach parents in the schoolyard, and the other would welcome them at the door. These changes, in addition to the actions – large and small – sparked renewed interest for parents to attend sessions.

We also believe the facilitators play a role in attracting certain participants. Whereas in the early sessions there was a great variety among parents with respect to gender and ethnicity, in the later sessions this changed to a more homogenous group of mainly Arabic-speaking mothers. With respect to the absence of men this could be the result of them being in the minority from the beginning, but also that the facilitators were both female. The presence of an Arabic-speaking facilitator with a migrant background proved essential to connect with Arabic-speaking participants to keep them motivated to come to the sessions. To keep parents motivated to attend LCs and share their opinions, it was



The SIREE project made visible at the school entrance.



LC participants indicated their country of origin on the large map displayed at the school entrance.

important the full co-creation cycle was completed and moved beyond the first dialogue stages. This is not always easy, especially when the school does not see the need to implement actions proposed by the parents, or when there is willingness but not enough time, energy, or financial resources to take action. In these instances, the facilitator can act as a bridge to find means that both suit the parents and school, and by ensuring that proposed actions stay on the agenda. It also helps to implement some “quick wins” from the early stages meaning actions that do not require much input from the school team, but show the parents are being listened to.

ACTIONS

Action 1: Consultation of local actors

Centre for General Wellbeing (CAW), was invited to talk about its operation e.g. homework support groups, play library, language classes for children during the holidays and parenting support. The liaison officer also presented an overview of local possibilities for adults to learn and practice Dutch language skills.



Islamic parents attend the school's Christmas celebration

Action 2: Visit to church celebration

In response to questions and concerns posed by mainly Islamic parents about the role of their children during church events, the school invited parents to join the Christmas celebration. Parents will also be invited to join future church activities.

Action 3: Wi-Fi in school

The school made the Wi-Fi code available in corridors to allow parents to make use of their translation app when communicating with the school staff.

A few actions were put on hold as a result of the Covid-19 regulations:

Action 4: Farewell camp for final year students

It was discussed how to organise this, keeping in mind the financial, cultural, and other concerns of the parents. The initial idea is to organise the camp on the school premises, so parents who wished to go home after dinner could do so. Parents are also asked to help with the food preparations.

Action 5: Overview of local support networks adjusted to the target group

The local authorities responsible for integration will be asked about the possibilities to put together an easily accessible overview of the local support network.

Action 6: Dutch language classes for parents at school

The headmaster proposed to host regular language classes for parents at school, so they can improve their Dutch language skills. In this way education-related themes can be integrated into the classes and it offers another opportunity for parents and school staff to meet. The classes will be organised with and by parents. At least one parent who is fluent in Dutch has offered to teach the parents.

Apart from **the school as a real partner** there are four remaining aspects identified as key for the process and continuation of the LCs.

Informal setting

Participants of the LCs should feel at ease, but this is not always that obvious. This certainly holds true for vulnerable parents whose voice is usually not heard in the parent council, and who are not familiar with “having a say” at the school. **An informal atmosphere helps make parents – as well as students and pupils – feel more at ease. This can be achieved by providing coffee, tea and cookies in a space familiar to the parents.**

Tackling the language barrier

Communication is absolutely key in LCs. Entering into dialogue, learning from each other and deepening the understanding of certain challenges and solutions is crucial, and all entails verbal or written communication to understand. In a setting where a large share of the participants do not speak a common language, it is extremely vital to pay attention to tackling the language barrier to achieve positive results. This can be done by visually supporting verbal communication, for instance by using symbols, pictures, and pictograms.

What is also effective is letting participants translate for each other, by finding a common language or using translation apps. Within the SIREE project, it was also reported that participation of pupils was stimulated in schools by allowing them to speak their home language, instead of the language of instruction, for instrumental purposes if say they do not know the meaning of a word. Creating a multilingual setting is therefore advised.

Stimulating participation

One of the main difficulties that facilitators were confronted with was the changing composition of the LCs, as well as the occasionally low turnout of participants especially when parents were involved. Inviting parents personally at the school gate or at their home, and clearly explaining the purpose of the LC, making oneself visible in the school and being invited by other participants were success factors.

Empathy and active listening to personal stories, experiences, and expectations of participants by the facilitator, and valuing contributions of all regardless of their role or personal background kept parents motivated to attend the sessions. It also helped promote the LCs as a language learning opportunity, and as a way to broaden the social network. Participants’ involvement was furthermore stimulated by applying dynamic work methods in small groups, and giving them the responsibility to develop and implement actions. **“Quick win” actions** motivated people as they could see the results of their contributions to the LCs from an early stage, as well as get direct answers to parents’ questions from the school team. **They needed to feel they were actually being listened to during the sessions.**

Involvement of the target group can also be fostered by distributing merchandise related to the project, such as booklets, pens, and a small agenda that can be used during and in between the sessions – which seemed to have more of an impact when younger participants were involved.

CASE STUDY: AN EXAMPLE OF QUICK WINS AND INVOLVEMENT

Multi-stakeholder involvement in reception education for quick wins

School type: Reception education

Country: Belgium

SIREE partner organisation: House of Learning

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The respective school for reception education has about 100 pupils from different age ranges (12-19) and nationalities, divided into six classes, depending on their level of literacy and how long they have been in the reception school. Usually, a pupil stays within this school for about a year, before moving on to mainstream education. The school wanted to participate in the SIREE project, but was aware it needed support from an objective person or organisation who could keep plans on track and bring good practices and new ideas from other schools.

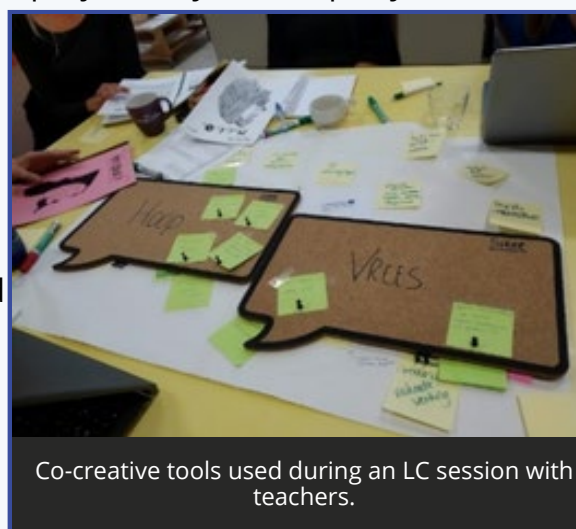
INSTALLING THE FIRST LEARNING COMMUNITY (LC)

We held a meeting with one of the teachers of the pupils to explain the project and make practical decisions, like which classes of students could participate. They decided to organise the Learning Communities (LCs) during school hours, so we could always work with the same group. They chose to organise the LCs during Dutch classes, and when the teacher of the pupils told colleagues about the SIREE project they were equally excited.

The first meeting was restricted to teachers only, so we could get to know each other. We decided the initial meeting with the pupils would be with none or just one or two teachers, so they could get used to us and get acquainted with the project. We could build some trust and both parties would feel more at ease to speak their opinions in like-minded groups, without any differences in “power”.

On the agenda:

- More information about the project
- Some theme examples from other LCs
- Some critical success factors, such as a clear contact person within the school who comes to each LC, involvement of the school, bottom-up approach where pupils have an actual voice
 - Hope and fear exercise: What do you hope we can reach with this project and what do you fear? This is an important exercise to keep focus along the way
 - Creating a support base for the project within the staff: What kind of themes would you like to work on during the project lifetime?



Co-creative tools used during an LC session with teachers.

In the first sessions with the teachers, we identified different challenges and divided them into themes:

- Professional network of the school
- Parental involvement
- Network of the pupils
- Pathways and flow options for transition
- Psychological issues

PROGRESS OF THE FOLLOWING SESSIONS

For the second and third meeting, we used the same methods but with different classes and with the pupils themselves. Two teachers were present to support with class management. The selected theme was **“What does integration mean to you?”** and everyone got to work with newspapers, magazines, scissors, and glue, resulting in twenty collages. This was a very approachable method to get to know the pupils, as we were able to talk with each of the groups, and it was interesting to see how everyone had a different view on integration.

While we were guiding the little groups, we could listen to their “informal” talks among each other. Not only were the words and photos they selected about “What is integration?” important to detect themes, but also their conversations among each other. In what they said, we could also detect some obstacles that pupils did not formulate explicitly, such as their lack of a Dutch-speaking social network. In the fourth LC session, we focused again on the teachers to give them feedback from the first LCs with the pupils and to work on the network from the school – something they prioritised themselves. We printed all the themes the pupils indicated, to see how we could connect the ideas from the teacher with the themes of the pupils. At this point, we detected a lot of similarities. The idea to install a quiet room, and implement some of the themes in that room was raised.

The theme for the next LC with the pupils was set. During this meeting, it was clear we had to work on both long and short-term goals/actions. Short-term goals could result in “quick wins” so that it was clear for teachers and pupils what the project could do for them. This turned out to be an important motivational factor. In the fifth and sixth LC, we worked on the action of the silent room with the pupils. The premise was “If we could implement such a room, what would it look like in an ideal situation?”. The principal of the school had given us the attic as a possibility to make a quiet room.

To make this as approachable as possible, we foresaw different methods (which are also accessible for students with a low level of Dutch) on how the pupils could give their input. They could paint, work with clay, draw or play with Lego. We also planned on how to practically make the room a “quiet space” with a cleaning plan and how to involve other pupils in the school.



A word cloud of themes raised by students, displayed in various shades of pink and magenta. The words are arranged in a dense, overlapping manner. The most prominent words include 'COLLABORATE', 'DUTCH', 'FRIENDSHIP', 'RESPECT', 'RELATIONSHIPS', 'FAMILY', 'TEAMWORK', 'HOME', 'LIVING TOGETHER', 'RECYCLE', 'HOUSE', 'GAMES', 'FOOD', 'BOXING', 'CULTURE', 'HOBBY', 'RELIGION', and 'HOUSE'.

Above: Word cloud of the themes that were raised by students.

For the seventh meeting with the teachers, we worked on the action of “expanding and reinforcing the (integration) network of the school”. We invited the integration officer of the municipality to make a stakeholder analysis, and made some specific plans which the members of the school could follow up. The eighth meeting was held with just teachers, as it was focused on a specific target the staff had formulated, namely on how to cope with psychological trauma in the classroom. During this session we were able to invite a professional who could give theoretical and practical input to teachers on how to handle psychological issues. The professional had developed a training session on how a teacher can expand the window of tolerance of pupils. This gives the teachers figurative “handles” or guidance to work on psychological issues during their classes.

The ninth meeting was focused on the theme of parental involvement, where participants of the LC were teachers and parents. To reach the target group of parents, we organised the LC during “parental contact”. We asked them different questions on their perception of the school and the environment and if they were interested in joining a parental group, which gives a voice to all parents in the school.

Unfortunately, this LC was organised just before the Covid-19 lockdown. We gathered some important information and contacts of parents who wanted to participate, but we could not carry out any actions. The school was closed until the end of May 2020. Teachers struggled to reach everybody for the daily tasks and messages, so the project of SIREE was not a priority at the time.

PARTICIPANTS IN THE SESSIONS

The group of teachers varied from meeting to meeting, but at least three teachers were stable participants. In the sessions with the pupils, the group was very stable as we were able to organise the meeting during school hours, with two classes. We kept people motivated because we were very focused on quick wins to gain their trust.

We also invited externals, such as the integration officer of the municipality, to ensure the formulated ideas were considered long-term. We could, for example, also have organised an integration network ourselves, but it is important the municipality can act on problems shared within this group, and to create a sustainable effect that lasts after the project’s lifetime as well.

ACTIONS

Action 1: Integration network

Teachers indicated the network of the school had to be enhanced and reinforced. A reinforcement of the network would also meet some desires pupils themselves indicated, like possibilities for free time activities and connection with Flemish-speaking people. In order to do this sustainably, we started an integration network in the school’s municipality. The SIREE project initiated the first meeting and we invited some important stakeholders, analysing together who should be a member of the network and in which role. The integration officer of the municipality took the lead and followed up on this network.

Action 2: OKrANT

A newspaper for parents, partners and pupils was developed in which readers can get an idea of what the reception class does. This newspaper will be published twice a year. Reactions on the first edition were very positive, among others from the parents. There was a lot of input from the pupils themselves. Students were given responsibility and were allowed to contribute a great deal. They felt more connected to the school by contributing to the newspaper.



Co-creative tools used during an LC session with teachers.

Action 3: Silent room

Creation of a silent room where pupils can get psychological support, or have the time and space to be at peace. Pupils gave their input on how such a room should look, and made a plan on how to realise it practically. They had a lot of great ideas, but sadly, some were not possible due to the financial means of the school. Due to the coronavirus lockdown, we could not evaluate if the space was used by pupils.

Action 4: Training session psychological issues (window of tolerance)

We organised a training session to support teachers in how they can offer psychological support to their pupils. By organising this training with an external partner, we could also expand the network of the school and give practical tips on where they could refer pupils if they couldn't help themselves. The session was well received by teachers. They found it interesting and inspirational, although they aspired to receive even more practical and especially more concrete tips.

The final aspect identified as key for the process and continuation of the LCs is below.

Partnerships with external organisations

House of Learning: For the LC in OKAN Menen, the partnership with the municipality was crucial. The school needed to extend and intensify their partnership with the local community, as it was then ad-hoc. The relationship with the municipality was essential to be able to signal institutional barriers, but also facilitate partnerships with other relevant organisations who have experience with students with a migrant background. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the House of Learning started an online, one-to-one matching service to practice the Dutch language, as schools were closed. To promote this offer and support our volunteers in a qualitative way, a partnership with the Agency of Integration was indispensable.

ARhus: We had partnerships with bridge figures working for Stad Roeselare in the pre-primary schools, whose main task was to make a bridge between parents and the school. We also had links with community workers in secondary schools, for instance Groep INTRO and social workers. Lastly, we worked with external partners who had expertise and methodologies to get input from the target group (e.g. iDrops, Twisted Studio). Further details on [ARhus' website](#).



Middelburg: There was collaboration with cafe Buurthuis Het Pennywafelhuis, with some musicians from Middelburg, and with daycare in the Element building for the youngest children of the parents who participated in the LCs.


Medway Plus: Crucial links were with welfare officers and social workers from Medway Council, the local authority, who attended a number of LCs in our primary schools in areas of high deprivation. A training organisation, Concept Training, also helped to facilitate LCs held with refugees in Ashford, and there was vital concept work done exclusively with refugees hosted by Ashford Borough Council.

Mechelen: Youth and outreach workers who knew the neighborhood very well were effective bridge figures, and community liaison officers particularly helped support the LCs. The parenting shop that provided workshops based on participants’ needs was helpful, as well as the service centre of the neighborhood where a community worker was responsible for supporting the people in the social housing area.


External partners who helped provide intervision¹² moments for teachers and students offered a great partnership. Also CIRRA (Centre of Expertise for Intellectual Reformation, Research and Advice) helped with the Socratic method, halal haram, support with cases and intervision topics, alongside CEAPIRE (Centre of Expertise and Advice for Prevention and Intervention of Radicalism and Extremism) on topics including radicalism and extremism on meeting points, training and intervision. Lastly, Buurtsport Mechelen was a help with neighborhood sport in the city.

Vives: Collaborations with external organisations were initiated and stimulated for practical reasons, to inform participants, to increase accessibility to local organisations, and to incorporate expertise on certain topics. In Bruges, some of the first sessions were organised in a building in the city to make it easier to refer and introduce participants to the administrative centre. External organisations that were invited to the LCs helped foster accessibility to local support networks or brought a specific expertise, such as a centre for social welfare and educational ambassadors (FMDO) who inform and raise awareness about the educational system and refer parents to other organisations.


Participants also visited some of the local organisations, such as a mosque, church, library and a social artistic organisation (Unie der Zorgelozen). Several LCs in primary schools worked closely with community liaison officers who were already familiar with some of the families, as well as the school and the local context. Their participation helped attract parents to the meetings and made them feel at ease. These bridge figures also facilitated access to local support networks and initiatives including formal and informal language classes, and information on discounted rates for leisure activities. Some students from the teacher training at VIVES developed teaching materials that helped both improve communication with parents and visualise the vocabulary.




It is crucial schools are open to positive change on all levels of the organisation




An informal atmosphere helps parents and students feel at ease, and can be achieved by simple acts like offering beverages and cookies in a familiar space



A multilingual setting can be achieved through visual communication, translation apps, or finding a member of staff or external person who speaks the language



Quick win actions help motivate participants as they see the results of their contributions to the LCs from an early stage



Partnerships with external organisations are crucial to develop the LCs

12 Intervision is an “intercolleagial” learning method in a group of equals guided by a chairperson, focusing either on improving personal functioning of staff or on improving treatment/care work.

2.6 Key themes and implemented actions

After each LC session, facilitators were asked to assign one or more general themes that were applicable to the content of that session in the log sheets. These themes were derived from the SIREE research report on challenges to the inclusion into education for parents and students with a refugee/migrant background (Van Maele and Poeze, 2018) and included:

- Education for newcomers (refugees and asylum seekers)
- Teacher characteristics
- Parent-school collaboration
- School policy
- Peer relationships
- Community cooperation
- Other

More details about these themes are discussed in section 2.2.

For each school level, for instance pre-primary and primary, secondary, and adult education, the key themes that were most frequently discussed across the LC sessions were calculated. This shed light on the kind of challenges that participants from distinct school levels were struggling with, and felt were a priority to find positive solutions for within the framework of the LCs. Facilitators also reported the actions that were developed and implemented on the log sheets. The next section brings together key themes at each school level, showing the kind of actions that schools and participants within a LC can take.

2.6.1 Pre-primary and primary education¹³

The LCs that were organised in pre-primary and primary schools mainly targeted parents with a migrant background. For them, the theme parent-school collaboration was most crucial. The LC sessions demonstrated that parents perceive many opportunities for improvement in this area. Discussions and actions on this key theme dealt with creating a gentle and warm welcome for parents and children in school, and improving the quality of relationships with teachers. Also, the need for schools to consider the language barrier in their communication with newcomer parents was often heard. Parental involvement in education, raising children at home, issues with supporting homework, and language learning opportunities for the parents and children were also common themes.

Community cooperation was the second most common theme for this school level. Across many LCs, parents learnt about various social service organisations that support newcomers in the community. Leisure activities for children and their families and opportunities to participate in the neighbourhood were also topics that parents wanted to learn about.

¹³ Pre-primary and primary school levels are taken together since LCs usually took place in schools that offered both levels and consequently, participating parents in these LCs had children in both levels. Moreover, the key themes and actions usually applied to both levels.

CASE STUDY: AN EXAMPLE OF COMMUNITY COOPERATION

Engaging migrant background parents and pupils in school through community-school cooperation

School type: Primary education

Country: United Kingdom

SIREE partner organisation: Medway Plus

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Phoenix Academy is a junior school for students 7-11 years old, situated in the Chatham Central Ward, which serves one of the most disadvantaged communities in Medway. The school has a 387-student place capacity, where 37% of the student body is of migrant heritage. There are currently 43 different countries and languages represented at this school. The teaching staff has worked extremely hard over the years on engaging these children and immersing them into the English education system, while trialling many strategies to limit the impact this may have had on their students' wellbeing. Care and diversity are just a couple of the core elements by which this school operates.

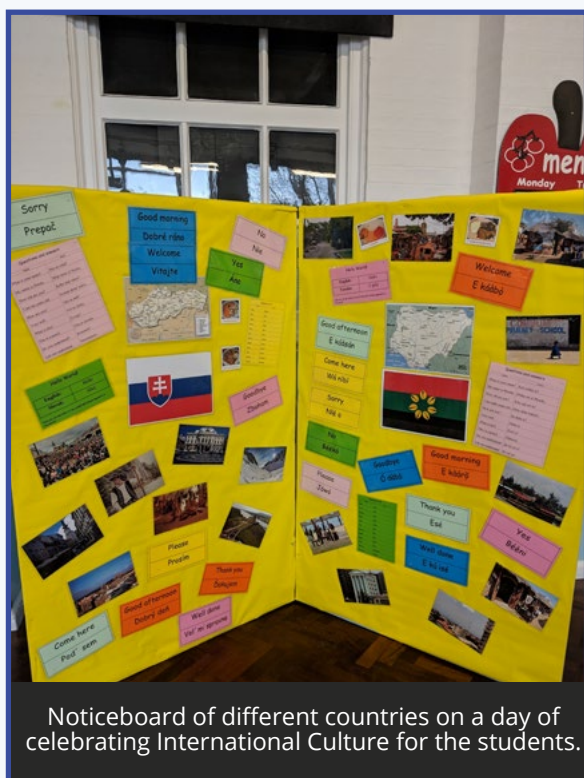
For them, the single biggest issues faced by the school and its families had always been the language barriers of these represented communities and concerns around the lack of support services for children and families in the wider Medway areas. There are many complex issues the school faces daily, so it was sometimes at a loss as to how best to engage with the migrant parents. The school's data and testimonies concluded it was particularly hard to engage parents especially in the area of their children's education, and teachers worried this would significantly impact on those migrant children long-term. Motivated by the SIREE project and a willingness by the whole school team to implement changes, Phoenix would become an active participant in the SIREE project.

INSTALLING THE LEARNING COMMUNITY (LC)

It was important to the Medway Plus team to represent the SIREE project, but we were also mindful of the need to approach our engagements with sensitivity and understanding to the migrant community, where they could contribute to the project based on their own individuality and set of beliefs – as much of our data had concluded they often felt isolated and excluded. We knew this because of the significant work and activities Medway Plus had already delivered to the communities in previous years. With these experiences in mind, we set up an informal meeting at the school, to put forward the aims and objectives of the project. With the help and support of the school's Special Educational Needs (SEN) teacher and Phoenix Project Leader, we began the implementation of the SIREE project.



Entrance to Phoenix Academy with welcome in several languages.



Noticeboard of different countries on a day of celebrating International Culture for the students.

It is vital to note the project leader has direct responsibility for those migrant children's education and a wealth of knowledge and understanding of her students which has proved valuable. For the purpose of the project, it was felt she would be in the best position to move it forward. From this initial meeting, we collectively decided we needed to set up a series of face-to-face meetings with other staff and personnel so we could explain the project in order to engage them. Here we would be able to spend some time getting to know and talk to those directly involved in the school structure and understand the school policies and frameworks.

We were extremely grateful the school's management board saw the project's potential and gave us free rein to deliver activities, they have also allowed us important time and space to manage the project. As long as we were careful to operate within the school's guidelines

and procedures, Phoenix School backed us fully. At the very first meeting with the School Administrative Team, we realised one of our first challenges was that we would not be able to gather any information directly involving children or their parents. Because of the UK's schools' safeguarding and confidentiality policy we knew this could significantly limit getting direct information and access to children, especially unaccompanied refugee children. While they could appear as a number, they could not be named. This had an impact on the numbers of participants we were able to record, although we know the numbers of those that may have benefitted from the project. We can only guess how many newcomer families and students we have reached.

The second challenge we faced was if this project were to work effectively we would need a team approach. This kind of approach means everyone on the project team has equal responsibility for its success, and Medway Plus could only facilitate this by arranging regular meetings on the school sites. Over a period of weeks and months we knew we had to be familiar figures within the school so teaching staff, parents and even students felt a sense of familiarity and presence. We did not feel it would be beneficial to promote an activity and turn up on the day like some of our other schools had wanted. It is vital to the project we were part of the wider Phoenix team. Our concerns were short-lived and unlike some other schools we encountered, Phoenix agreed and embraced our team wholeheartedly.



Display of SIREE project on a day of celebrating International Culture for the students.

PROGRESS OF THE SESSIONS

From our initial LC meetings, we began to engage with a cohort of regular staff. These teachers were all enthusiastic, had a special interest in migrant education, and attended almost all of the LC meetings and activities. Their involvement provided children and families with security, familiarity, and trust, and they were the voice of the parents and students that allowed us to understand some of the issues they face, which included not knowing school routines or what their children were learning.

Equally there are those staff and personnel who only felt compelled to contribute their thoughts and feelings regarding certain matters and issues at different stages along the project. These included issues around how to safely manage the traffic of parents coming in to attend the SIREE activities in a safe and structured way. Of course, in terms of attendance and activity function we worked together to address these important school procedures in a very careful, monitored way. We always welcomed advice on the activities and the purpose of these engagements, and because of that mutual respect it was kindly decided the school would free up a member of staff who would always be present and willing to support us.

Those staff have attended different LC meetings and activities, and have contributed many useful ideas. For example, at the beginning of the project we were finding it difficult to engage with parents. After explaining our frustration to teachers they suggested we could have early access to the school grounds to chat with parents, and they would be there to introduce us. It has become clear their involvement has laid very solid foundations for us to work with, and they enabled us to begin to build relationships with parents.

Another example of their work was explaining that migrant families very rarely came to school, but would happily watch the after school football team. We developed the idea to trial a summer club on the school premises. Teachers helped to think outside of the box, and shared that migrant parents did not let their children attend extracurricular activities, because of a fear of actively engaging with the school. Although not the success we hoped it would be, as parents did not engage, it proved extremely useful for future engagements, as we discovered that you cannot plan activities you believe may work without actively seeking the views of parents first.

A plus was more teachers were sharing vital information with others in the team they had not been aware of. One specialist teaching assistant explained to us that one of her parents liked to watch his son playing football in the playground, but because of a language barrier he did not know he could be invited into the school grounds to watch his son. She was able to share these details, and that meant in future information would be given out in multiple languages to include all parents.

ACTIONS

We are glad we sought views of all frontline staff as an action, as we feel this mix of voices that included parents and students has contributed to the effectiveness of the project.

Action 1: The Young Language Ambassadors

It has also motivated staff and families to contribute to what was our ultimate success: The Young Language Ambassadors. An action whereby students support the wellbeing of other migrant pupils through buddying up schemes and playground friends. The ambassadors can be the voice for new migrant children who do not yet have the language skills to express their thoughts and feelings. Knowing parents are engaged when it involves their children has been the breakthrough we needed, and they have commented on their pride in the children's achievement.



The Young Language Ambassadors presentations.

The Young Language Ambassadors in its infancy was created with an intention to support other migrant children within school – we did not realise just how it would engage their parents. The success of this activity has been adopted into other schools and all have commented on its effectiveness. We all agree without the SIREE project this would have been impossible. The Young Language Ambassadors initiative is something the school and the SIREE project are very proud of, and at several of our events we welcomed pupils that have been awarded certificates of achievement.

Action 2: Teachers Learning Community

Our Teachers Learning Community has given us a platform and a way of promoting SIREE to their families that we may not have achieved if we had not worked as a team. We have put together some fantastic actions like our coffee mornings, which allowed us to develop our community advocates scheme to be able to enlist non-migrant community parents to support and befriend other migrant parents. Also, our engagement days where we could celebrate the work of the SIREE project and share the real experiences of what it would be like to be a newcomer living in the UK.

Action 3: English class and community cook-ups

Behind the scenes the teachers understanding the aims of SIREE were out there having gentle conversations with migrant parents who were reluctant to enter the school gates, let alone come to any activity. It is their information that led us to more family-based activities, which were our English class and community cook-ups where we were able to provide English lessons to migrant families and share dishes from families' homelands. We talked about the recipes and shared stories while cooking and eating the food in a very informal way. We were able to fully engage with our migrant families.



Learning Community activities – cook-up club (left) and community advocates (right).

They are their own voice now for migrant families and were instrumental in gathering information we could use to move this project forward. They have a voice and much still to do but within the LC meetings, there was empowerment.

Everyone felt useful and part of the wider community that has been a powerful tool. Having those parents on board means the school can continue long after the SIREE project has finished.



Learning Community event – launch day at Phoenix Academy.

Another common theme discussed during the LCs was **education for newcomers** that included topics such as language learning and support, and feeling welcome and safe in the new community. Newcomer parents wanted to receive more information on the school system, and on the dominant socio-cultural norms and values in the host community.

It became clear to the different participants that a multi-agency approach was needed, to improve the inclusion of newcomer families into education and the wider neighbourhood.

Finally, **school policy** was a theme where parents raised several questions:

- How does the school approach diversity?
- What is the school's policy on homework?
- What does the curriculum look like?
- How can we make the playground a more attractive area for children?

In line with the above themes, several actions were executed together with parents, and occasionally children, in pre-primary and primary education. These included:

- Information sessions about the school or broader educational system
- A day with mothers and children celebrating Mother's Day outside the school
- A storytelling bag about raising children at home
- A play case for children to use at school
- Informing parents about the Catholic religious classes and activities in school
- A bike ride with parents to get to know the city
- A walk in the forest together with parents
- A maintenance or school repairs work day at which parents participated
- Cooking sessions with parents
- Opening the school gates after school hours
- A meet and greet session for parents
- Offering coffee and tea to parents in the morning
- A game day at school for the children
- Tinkering or crafting with grandparents/parents at school
- A multilingual read aloud week where parents participated
- A flexible way to practice the Dutch language online

2.6.2 Secondary education

Most LCs that were organised in secondary schools included classes or groups of former newcomer students. Not surprisingly, **education for newcomers** was the key theme among those participants. The challenges which they brought up most often aligned with their newcomer situation, and the uncertainties related to their new school and locality. This was reflected in discussions on topics like how to deal with emotions, how to become resilient, what are socially acceptable behaviours, or how to support unaccompanied minors.

Other topics included meaningful leisure activities, as well as combatting discrimination, inequality, and racism. Most youngsters were motivated to learn the new language in school, but equally they were in search of more language learning opportunities. Besides, their transition to the regular education track and contact with native-born peers was a topic that received ample attention across the LC sessions.

CASE STUDY:

NEWCOMERS IN SECONDARY EDUCATION

Welcoming migrant students at school through creating a supportive network and providing information

School type: Secondary education

Country: France

SIREE partner organisation: ADICE

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The Learning Community (LC) took place in a private high school for general, technological, and vocational education. The school, the Commercial and Industrial Institution called EIC (Etablissement Industriel et Commercial) in the town of Tourcoing, welcomes 6,000 students from middle school to BAC+3. The training courses are dispersed in several buildings scattered throughout the town. The school welcomes several dozen migrant students, but has no specific reception and integration protocol.

Teachers expect students to be easily integrated into the classroom and not encounter any difficulties that could affect their academic performance. Through the SIREE project, the EIC wished to develop specific responses to the growing number of migrant students welcomed into the establishment. Despite its size, the EIC does not have a boarding school-type structure, and very few partnerships have been built with local social actors.

INSTALLING THE FIRST LEARNING COMMUNITY (LC)

The LCs were set up with the help of the Principal Education Advisors, which is the staff in charge of school life. Management staff made sure pupils and teachers did not have to attend class during the LC sessions. As the approach is completely new for the school and students, we proceeded during the first sessions to include elements of conviviality by welcoming the volunteer students in the group and identifying a place in the school different from a classroom.

The school staff constructed the group of participating students based on an analysis of the individual school records available, as well as the personal difficulties encountered by each. The main difficulty concerned the pupils' different timetables, so to overcome this it was decided to schedule the LCs over lunch, with a cold meal provided from the budget allocated to the project. Considering the particular difficulties of each youngster, it was decided not to address them in large groups. ADICE was in charge of identifying external partnerships and persons likely to provide answers to the individual difficulties reported by the school team.

PROGRESS OF THE SESSIONS

The objective set was to hold one session per month, allowing all participants who wanted to be involved such as teachers, students, and management staff. Throughout the LCs, it was difficult to get everyone to attend. Firstly, several volunteer teachers were involved in other school projects and secondly, lunchtime is a complicated time to manage by the school team. Finally, several of the migrant students were enrolled in vocational courses, which require internship periods of several weeks. By focusing on the major concerns of the school and the pupils, it was possible to maintain the motivation of those taking part in the sessions.



At each session, a management staff member was present to help facilitate the necessary exchanges of information between staff. The school team carried out an inventory of the difficulties of each migrant student, and identified the internal responses that could be made, as well as the external responses for which partnerships had to be built. With the entire group including students, teachers, management, and school life team, we collectively defined the items where it was essential to create sustainable responses.

ADICE has also helped to mobilise experts in order to provide the best possible answers to questions raised by pupils and teachers. For example, one session a lawyer was invited to answer on the state of the law for migrants, and conditions of administrative regularisation, according to the age of the young person and the date of his entry into France. Each young migrant who wished to could benefit from free individual legal support, and the staff of the establishment has a resource person on migrant rights issues. The first concerns expressed by students were those related to the material and daily living conditions of young, isolated migrants. They often had not yet regularised their administrative situation and sometimes found themselves in survival conditions to cover food, accommodation, or transport costs.



In order to address these needs, three partnerships were built:

- Les Restos du Cœur, a charity that distributes meals and food to people in need
- The metropolitan transport company Ilévia provided reduced fares
- An association for emergency accommodation for young minors, from the network of parishes on the north-eastern side of the metropolis

After several exchange sessions, it was useful to define the actions to be built in order to provide more support for migrant pupils. Many of them already have several years of experience, being confronted with the maze and hassles of administrative regularisation, or looking for accommodation. In agreement with them, and in order to provide significant help to migrant pupils who will be attending the school in the coming years, it was agreed to develop a practical guide. This guide collects all the procedures, good contacts, and steps necessary for the social and educational integration of young migrant schoolchildren. The guide can be given to each student with a migrant background entering the school.

The themes addressed in the guide were:

- The administrative and legal regularisation of the situation of young people
- The issues of taking charge of school transport and accommodation
- Healthy food and health practices
- The conditions for academic success

A large majority of pupils dealt with their administrative situation during the school year, and the sessions were therefore able to focus on other priorities.

The guide also identifies other existing services that may be useful to students:

- Resource personnel within school (school life, school nurse, school catering)
- Help available close to school (homework help associations, social services)
- Local support networks (transport, accommodation)
- Charitable aid (Restos du Coeur, Secours Populaire)

One of the difficulties in such a large school of 6,000 pupils is obtaining a schedule of meetings that suits all pupils and teachers concerned. Internship and examination periods also limited the number of meetings, and lockdown impacted face-to-face classes in high schools, causing a delay on the production of the guide to welcoming migrant pupils.

ACTIONS

Action 1

Precise information work on the rights of migrants and also the conditions of administrative regularisation according to the age of the young person, where we needed a **specialised lawyer**. She described the four categories of administrative situations and the results expected after the submission of regularisation files. This intervention was especially useful for pupils, but also for the teaching, administrative and school life staff. Several students were able to benefit from the lawyer's advice and have since dealt with their administrative situation. This free intervention will continue after the SIREE project. The lawyer agreed to be a legal resource to help migrant students who express the need, but also to answer specific questions from teachers and administrative staff of the school.

Action 2

In addition, in conjunction with the school life team, the **individual situation** of each of the students participating in the LC was analysed. A total of 11 students presented difficulties related to their housing conditions, the lack of resources to eat or buy hygiene products, and to pay for public transport. Several steps were taken with the social services in the commune of Tourcoing, as well as those of the department.

Action 3

In connection with the association of the **Restos du Coeur**, we worked to ensure all 11 pupils have free access to distribution of hot meals, foodstuffs, and hygiene products throughout the year. Other students in the school who also find themselves in the same situation will be able to benefit from the services, in accordance with the partnership agreement.

The EIC school will provide an updated list of students eligible for the service each school term. The Restos du Coeur de Lille, Roubaix, Tourcoing and Armentières branches will be open to them.



Students receiving a presentation from les Restos du cœur.

Action 4

The metropolitan public transport company has studied the individual situation of the pupils in order to offer them, whenever possible, a **transport pass** at the minimum monthly rate of €3.80. An Ilévia agent in charge of the mediation service is the school's contact and will facilitate the creation of individual administrative files and disseminate information on the consequences of fraud on metropolitan public transport. The reconciliation association, which works with local parishes, provided a meeting with parishioners who could offer free temporary accommodation to students.

Action 5

The teaching team, following proposals from the pupils, is planning to draw up a **resource guide** of all the support available to migrants. This resource guide among other areas will include information on school life, accommodation, charitable associations in the metropolis, legal support and possible reductions in transport and leisure activities.

The second most common theme in secondary education was school policy. Participants talked about the curriculum and stressed their aspirations to learn other competencies beyond the host country's language of instruction. Disciplinary school rules and regulations, racism, absence of respect, and the perception of not really feeling welcome in school were often discussed.

Community cooperation was raised as a vital theme, and being better informed about activities and support that local organisations offered. Finally, youngsters frequently spoke about **the need for more teacher support** for intercultural teaching and language learning, and teachers' expectations, prejudices, and unequal treatment of pupils.

Within these LCs, actions such as the following were executed:

- A classroom dinner with dialogue for students and teachers
- Extra teaching hours for mathematics
- Changing the disciplinary approach of the teachers
- A "quiet room" in school for students when they needed some time to be alone
- A baking afternoon for the mothers
- Collaboration with other schools in the neighbourhood
- Interviewing neighbourhood residents
- Workshops on cultural diversity and racism by external organisations
- A guide for the school to support the enrolment of future newcomer students
- Art sessions for students
- A breakfast engagement meeting for parents
- A Saturday English learning club for families

2.6.3 Education for adults

In the LCs connected to adult education and higher education institutions, participants explored topics that align with the theme of **education for newcomers**. Newcomer adult students pointed out their needs for more individualised support and guidance, for more chances outside classes to learn the language, and for better accessible information about the educational and social system. Cultural differences between migrants and non-migrants were discussed, and opportunities and barriers to make the switch to the labour market.

Community cooperation appeared as the second most prominent theme across the LCs in adult education. The participants signalled their needs to get to know local supportive social care organisations, have role models and enlarge their social networks. The LCs reported better communication and more intense collaboration between social service organisations, local administrative authorities, and the institute for adult education was needed. The lack at the educational institution of a desk offering social services to newcomer adult students was raised as an important reason for not having easy access to significant information.

Third, **school policies** were substantially discussed. The participants explored topics such as individual trajectory guidance, the school's communication with them, language learning opportunities outside classes, as well as social school meeting points and the evaluation system used in school.

Finally, adult newcomers often talked about **peer relationships**. For them it was a real challenge to establish friendships in and out of class, and cope with racism or discrimination between adult students from different ethnic backgrounds in the same school.

CASE STUDY: AN EXAMPLE OF NEWCOMERS IN ADULT EDUCATION

Supporting theme prioritisation and social-emotional learning (SEL) among newcomers in adult education

School type: Adult education

Country: The Netherlands

SIREE partner organisation: Municipality of Middelburg

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

One of the Learning Communities (LCs) in Middelburg was formed together with the TAAT Foundation, which offers language courses to illiterate newcomers. The students, whose backgrounds varied, came to school three times a week for half a day over 30 weeks. In 2019-2020 most of the students came from Syria, Eritrea, and Somalia. The ages vary greatly, between 20 and 50 years old, and the LC consisted of 10 to 20 participants. The methods used by the TAAT foundation are called TPR (Total Physical Response) and TPRS (Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling). TPR is where the students learn concepts by hearing, looking, feeling, talking, reading and role play. This approach needs a rich learning environment and stimulates active learning, elements we know are conducive to the learning process. TPRS is where students tell stories, and these provide the basis for reading, writing, and speaking a new language. The course meetings are very interactive due to the use of these learning methods.



WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF MIDDELBURG?

At the LCs, it was important to work on integration in education, cultural integration, and parental involvement. The model of social-emotional learning (SEL) (Durlak et al, 2017; Van Overveld, 2017; Goedhart, 2018) is used to give shape to these goals. SEL means there is attention to self-awareness, self-control, social awareness, establishing relationships, and making choices within the setting of the classroom, school, home and neighbourhood. The next elements characterised the design and content of the LCs in Middelburg:

- **Participation:** doing something together with others
- **SEL:** the basis of doing things together
- **Integration:** national government placed a strong emphasis on language and work, the Municipality of Middelburg wanted to put a strong emphasis on culture
- **Cultural sensitivity:** create LCs where participants listen, pay attention to differences in each other's opinions, norms, and values, talk about and work on tolerance and respect, and pay attention to positive aspects of being different
- **Parental involvement:** home and pre-school involvement and parent support
- **Support** to make choices on which subjects will be discussed
- **Using discussion boards and role play** as helpful didactic methods for participants with different cultural backgrounds and native languages

METHOD

During the first meeting of a LC, 80 photos were used that relate to topics of self-awareness, self-control, social awareness, establishing relationships and making choices within the setting of the classroom, school and home and neighbourhood.

The participants were given time to look at the photos and asked to choose two

pictures of topics they want to talk, learn, or have questions about. In a circle they explain why they chose the photos/subjects.

The explanation is noted, and the most crucial topics are determined by giving a preferential vote with cards. The photo with the most cards will be discussed at the next meeting, and the teacher and facilitator plan for this. During the meetings, attention is paid to stories, language exercises, values and customs, education, emotions, social contacts, exchange of knowledge and actions. Discussion boards are used for SEL topics and



Illustrated image of scenes in Middelburg.

designed by an illustrator who used Middelburg scenes as a source of inspiration, such as the community centre, living room, market, park, school, and a schoolyard.

HOW DID WE APPROACH THE TAAT FOUNDATION?

- 1) A presentation is made on what, who, why, where, when and how, and colleagues of the Municipality of Middelburg approached schools with the proposal to start a LC. Facilitators had a meeting with the principal and one or two teachers
- 2) There was a second conversation about how the school deals with topics such as participation, SEL, integration, cultural sensitivity and parental involvement, its methods, and materials
- 3) The third meeting was where the model of SEL and the working method was explained and an overview of school materials that could be used during the LC

WHY DID THE TAAT FOUNDATION WANT TO PARTICIPATE?

- Asking participants what they want to talk and learn about is new and attractive
- TAAT wants to integrate aspects other than language acquisition, such as SEL, into its own program
- TAAT wants to contribute to increasing knowledge about integration in education
- The equal cooperation between teachers and the facilitator, such as preparing the meetings to learn from each other
- Developing new materials and lessons they can integrate into their own program

ACTIONS

The students chose the following topics for actions: **living, doing things together, emotions, social contacts with people in the neighbourhood, activities in the neighbourhood, and taking good care of nature.** A group of neighbours were visited, a barbeque held with the families of participants of the foundation, and there is now more

intensive cooperation with the Pennywafelhuis – an initiative with creative workshops and a meeting point in the foundation's neighbourhood. We have talked several times about education and raising children, but not all participants are parents. Two concrete actions include learning Dutch songs with a music teacher at primary school Het Element, and also making a poster about nature with text in the participants' mother tongue for the primary schools in the district.

DESCRIPTION OF MEETINGS ON SUBJECT “DOING GOOD FOR THE EARTH”

During the first LC meeting of the new group of the TAAT Foundation, four participants from last year's group were present together with nine new participants, from Syria, Eritrea, and Somalia. Eighty photos were spread out in the hall of the building and participants chose two photos each which symbolised for them topics they considered crucial. Back in the classroom, the participants said why they chose the photos. For example, a slogan on one photo showed a mother and child and a participant said: “Talking to children is important, how should you talk to children?”. Many participants did not have a question, but indicated they considered the subject important. Another example was a slogan of parents helping at the school of their children: “If the school asks for help, do so”. A photo was taken of all participants with the images they chose. Participants placed cards on the photo they wanted to discuss next time, and the topic chosen was “Doing Good for the Earth”.

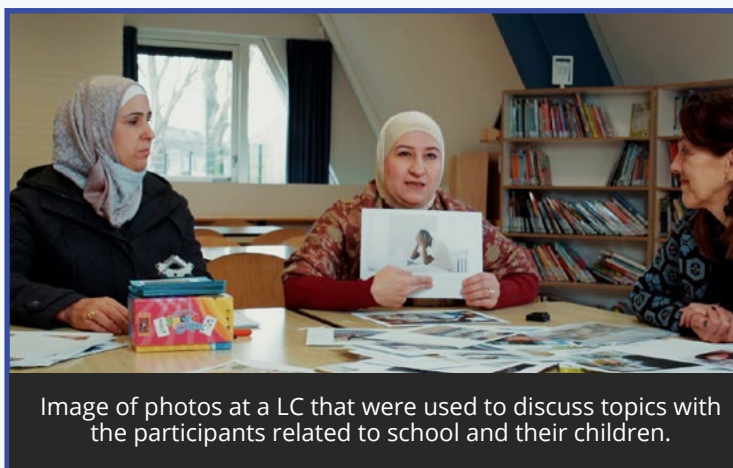


Image of photos at a LC that were used to discuss topics with the participants related to school and their children.

Both facilitator and teachers of the foundation discussed the difference between participants with questions, and those who indicated what was on the photos. It may have been better to give the explanation in the native language for this first lesson, so the facilitator investigated whether this was possible. For the next meeting, the facilitator made a PowerPoint template with pictures, videos, and worksheets. The teachers made language exercises and put the question forward: “What can we do here in the neighbourhood to be good to the Earth?”.

The second meeting in October used a discussion board of a park to introduce the topic. We talked about how clean it is in the park and asked how did that happen? A man eats cake from a plastic plate with a plastic fork, what does he do with the plate and fork afterwards? There are people working with papers, what do they do with the papers afterwards? We talked about waste separation and the bins at school, at home and in the neighbourhood. We discussed tips for using less plastic, such as not using soap bottles but bars of soap. We looked at posters, listened to songs and watched videos for children on this topic, and they were asked what they could do in the neighbourhood to work towards a cleaner planet. All participants happily received a bar of Aleppo Soap.

Below: The LC participants with their posters about being good to the Earth.



At a second meeting in October, TAAT Foundation teachers made speaking cards with questions for participants to ask each other about the topic “Being good to the Earth”. At the last meeting it was agreed participants would make posters about the environment for primary schools in the area, but with text on it in their native language (see above). The posters were drawn and pasted with texts in their mother tongue at this meeting, and the facilitator enlarged them to A3 size. Parents brought the posters to the schools where their children attended, and one was also put in the LC room as well as at the Pennywafelhuis.

Across these LCs, actions including those presented below were implemented:

- Regular online and offline talking tables where newcomer students could practice the new language while speaking to someone local
- Visits to houses in the neighbourhood and getting to know the resident(s)
- A visit to the local museum
- Date sessions with employers
- A market where students could meet social service organisations
- A buddy system
- A periodic newsletter
- An access pass for cultural city activities

Figure 2.9: Key themes in the different educational levels.

KEY THEMES IN (PRE-) PRIMARY EDUCATION	KEY THEMES IN SECONDARY EDUCATION	KEY THEMES IN ADULT EDUCATION
<p>PARENT-SCHOOL COLLABORATION</p> <p>Soft landing, parent-teacher relationships, communication, parental involvement, raising kids at home, language learning, homework, ...</p>	<p>EDUCATION FOR REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS</p> <p>Emotions, unaccompanied minors, spare time activities, discrimination, inequality, resilience, language learning, social acceptable behaviour, transition to regular education, ...</p>	<p>EDUCATION FOR REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS</p> <p>Individual support, the need for extra language support, access to information, cultural differences, transition to the labour market, unadjusted expectations, ...</p>
<p>COMMUNITY COOPERATION</p> <p>Local organisations that support newcomers, spare time activities for children, community integration and activities, ...</p>	<p>SCHOOL POLICY</p> <p>Curriculum, disciplinary policy, playground activities, school regulations, respect, racism at school, feeling welcome at school, ...</p>	<p>COMMUNITY COOPERATION</p> <p>Collaboration between distinct social service organisations, social service desk at the school, role models, social network of adult students, ...</p>
<p>EDUCATION FOR REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS</p> <p>Language support, feeling welcome and safe, multi-agency approach, social-cultural norms and values, information on the school system, ...</p>	<p>COMMUNITY COOPERATION</p> <p>External organisations in the neighbourhood, activities for families to engage in, social integration networks</p>	<p>SCHOOL POLICY</p> <p>Individual trajectory guidance, communication policy, extra language learning opportunities, meeting points at school, evaluation system, ...</p>
<p>SCHOOL POLICY</p> <p>Diversity policy, homework policy, the playground, curriculum, ...</p>	<p>TEACHER CHARACTERISTICS</p> <p>Support for intercultural teaching competencies and language learning, expectations and prejudices, unequal treatment of students, ...</p>	<p>PEERS</p> <p>Friendships in and out of the school, racism between adult students, ...</p>

Figure 2.10: *Actions taken in the different educational levels.*

ACTIONS IN (PRE-) PRIMARY EDUCATION	ACTIONS IN SECONDARY EDUCATION	ACTIONS IN ADULT EDUCATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explaining the educational system • Celebrating Mother's day with mothers and children outside the school • Storytelling bag on raising children • Play case for children • Informing parents about the nature of religious classes in school • Bike ride with parents throughout the city • Walk in the forest with parents • Maintenance work day at school • Opening the school gates after school hours • Cooking sessions • Parent meet and greet sessions • Coffee morning for parents • Organising a game day at school for the children • Tinkering with grandparents and parents • Multilingual read aloud week 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborating with other surrounding schools on the project • Baking afternoon for mothers • Class dinner and dialogue • Changing the disciplinary approach in school • Extra teaching hours on maths for interested students • Installing a 'quiet room' in school • Interviewing the neighbourhood • Organising a 'dialogue day' at schools • Creating a guide for schools to support future R/M students • Social services running workshops on cultural diversity, racism, ... • Art sessions for students • Parent breakfast engagement meeting • Saturday English learning club for families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking tables • Digital voting poll for adult students on the project progression • Paying visits to houses in the neighbourhood • Visiting a museum • Date sessions with employers in the neighbourhood • Local social service organisations market • Developing a buddy system • Periodic newsletter creation • Providing an access pass for cultural activities in the city to adult students

Key Points - Important themes



An important theme in LCs at pre-primary and primary schools was parent-school collaboration, followed by community cooperation



Education for newcomers, school policy, community cooperation, and need for more teacher support were popular themes discussed at secondary school LCs



A theme highlighted at adult education LCs was peer relationships on racism between students and the difficulty establishing friendships in and out of class



LC actions included creating a regular newsletter, collating a guide for schools to support newcomer families, language classes and visiting cultural spots in the area

2.7 Impact of Covid-19 measures

The Covid-19 measures in 2020 had an undeniable impact on the functioning of the LCs. Most were in their second year, whereas some installed later, were only in their first year. During the initial lockdown from March to June 2020, the schools in all project countries had been closed, which meant that no activities for the project could be physically carried out on-site. During the second half of 2020, the evolution of the virus and the rigour with which measures were taken were not the same in all project countries, which meant the impact on the LCs was not the same everywhere.

For instance, in Belgium, most schools no longer allowed external parties – including parents – on their premises from October, whereas in the Netherlands the LCs could continue at some schools. Organising LCs outside of school proved difficult given the restrictions on gatherings and fear of infection among participants. **It was not an option for most LCs to switch to online sessions either as a result of digital illiteracy, lack of electronic equipment or a stable internet connection, and the difficulty of meeting the needs of all attendees online.**

Consequently, most of the LCs were forced to be interrupted or modified their activities as a result of the measures taken. Despite these challenging times and thanks to the already established relationships with schools, parents, and students, as well as the results already achieved, some activities continued albeit from a distance.

Examples of such initiatives include:

- Making a digital version of a host country language to learn by matching volunteers with newcomers and offering online support
- An online event to help newcomers accredit their foreign diploma
- Preparations for an adjusted open school day at the start of the academic year
- Partnerships with organisations to reach out to pupils that schools could not contact
- Providing vulnerable students with borrowed laptops from the local government
- Reaching out to vulnerable parents to improve the contact with schools and provide the necessary local and material support in collaboration with partners
- Helping staff understand how the festival of Ramadan may affect students and answering their questions
- Meetings with parents for socially distanced walks to respond to questions
- Activities in the afternoon break
- Online focus groups with students to plan for an event

As part of the teacher module, students in Belgium developed concrete actions at the request of participating pre-primary and primary schools to help support both teachers and pupils. These included:

- Digital skills
- Activities to improve host country and foreign language learning
- Visualisation of mathematical exercises
- Reception of newcomers
- Interactive talking boards
- Visual games for the playground
- Support movement or gymnastics lessons with symbols to show moves

In order to promote the re-launch of the LCs, customised face masks were designed and distributed to schools and other participants in mid-2020.



Figure 2.11: Customised face masks.

2.8 The added value of the LCs

In section 2.2.3 we argued that LCs help strengthen the educational integration of young people and adults with a newcomer background, as institutional changes are only beneficial if the needs of those concerned are considered. The LCs provide a platform where the experiences and insights of vulnerable students and their families – whose voices are often left unheard in decisions or changes in a school context – are appreciated and validated in collaborative school making processes.

What do the participants themselves consider the added value of the LC approach? For evaluation of the LCs, input was collected during partner meetings and from regular emails partners sent about the progress of the LCs during the project. In 2020 and 2021, school personnel, migrants, newcomers, SIREE facilitators and external partners, were questioned – using a semi-structured (allowing new ideas to be brought up) interview approach – about their experiences with the LCs.

2.8.1 A comprehensive and multifaceted approach

The LCs provided an important way for school teams to gain new insights concerning the needs of the target group. Listening to parents and students whose voice is more often left unheard was especially considered a major benefit of the project. A Belgian primary school liaison officer said: *“There were a lot of concerns about the hygiene of the sanitary building [...] The LCs helped to bring these concerns to the surface and to reveal the concerns from parents we would not have heard otherwise because they usually stay in the background.”*

Bringing together different actors at the same table broke down barriers to ask questions or voice concerns, and allowed teachers to receive feedback about certain issues including the behaviour of parents and students.

Quite often, the behaviour of parents is reduced to their cultural or religious identity. For instance, if parents do not attend school festivities this is often considered a result of their religion. When parents are asked about this during the LCs another reason may arise. For instance, in one of the participating schools it was not their religious identity, but the school's smoking policy that caused parents to stay away or leave early. **The LCs thus helped avoid reducing or judging the parent or student on one partial identity.**

Involving the target group in the development of actions and thereby contributing to a “better” school also helped create a sense of belonging and ownership among participants. **Parents admitted they really appreciated that through the LCs they were more engaged with the education of their children**, and through the project they were allowed to think along with the school on how certain obstacles could be tackled from the inside. School staff considered it valuable that the LCs not only provided input about needs of the participants, but also that they could fine-tune new actions, which helped the development and implementation of original, unique and innovative actions. A member of a Belgian secondary school team said: *“The pupils expressed that they wanted to learn extra languages like English and French, even though they are in Special Needs Education.”*

As they saw the added value of this for a wider group of pupils, this school installed an additional elective that included foreign languages. As a school director of a Belgian school shared: *“It is not only the school who decides, you need to consider and listen to each other [...] They [in this case referring to parents] have a lot of trust in the school, but it is good to hear what they think is important.”*

Crucially, the LCs provided a platform where less openly discussed topics could be raised. In LCs with parents this included for example concerns about the children's wellbeing or the religious affiliation of the school, if this did not match those of the parents. In the LCs with students, this included more serious issues such as racist confrontations. A secondary school teacher in Belgium said: "Racism was discussed, something they don't talk about easily. What I remember from this is that one student said that he was confronted with racism in the street after which another student responded, 'well yeah, that is normal'. That is when I realised: no this is not normal, it is not normal that you think that this is normal. That certainly is something that stuck with me."

When installed with great attention, care and patience, **the LCs can become a safe space for the participants where they can feel at ease and free to voice their thoughts.** The example of a student with a speaking disability who refused to speak in class, but who talked for the first time during a LC session is a perfect illustration of this. The LCs have an important learning effect, for the school but also for individual participants, because the discussions go beyond practical matters. This helps participants gain a better understanding of each other. As a primary school director in Belgium explained: *"Having parents and teachers together in a Learning Community about the same topic has an absolute added value. You have the input from the parents and immediately the input of the teachers and [in that room and at that time] they can find each other. That is the beauty of the project."*

For school staff it was especially valuable to learn about children and their families, which helped increase understanding and appreciation. Such conversations were considered as *"enriching"*. A Belgian primary school director shared: *"It is enriching to come together with different cultures and to listen and see how they do certain things differently."* Importantly, it also helped participants realise that all actors have the same goal, as the school director continued: *"I learnt that we have the same intentions, we want the best for every child and together we are responsible for the full development. We all want the child to thrive."*

Generally, the interviewees noted **improved parent-teacher relationships**, which was explained by the LCs lowering the barriers for parents to come to the school and a reduced distance between parents and teachers. As the facilitator of an LC in Belgium said: *"After some time, parents and teachers were no longer strangers to each other. Parents found it easier to ask questions. Teachers and parents were literally brought together. The parents felt empowered to be considered as 'the experts' of the children, and together with the school, took on their share of responsibility."*

One mother at a Belgian primary school also explained: *"What I really like [about the LCs] is the interaction with the teachers. We were with the mothers in the teachers' room [where the sessions were organised] and during the break the teachers came to sit at the table with us. That was a really nice moment. You could talk with the teachers about the children and the activities they were doing – before you did not have that. That is how you get to know each other and from there other things grow. The distance is literally reduced."*

The impact of the LCs was also felt beyond the sessions. As one school director in Belgium expressed: *"Parents and teachers now feel more comfortable to communicate with each other."* A primary school teacher in Belgium also explained: *"We notice that they [the parents] are now more likely to express minor concerns, about trivial things, for instance if the swimming shorts of the child [are] ok."*

A school director of another primary school in Belgium noticed the same improvements: *"You notice that it is easier for parents to come to us. Before there was always a barrier, because parents thought: who am I to speak to the teacher or director? Thanks to the LCs the parents notice that the teacher and director are also just humans they can turn to with their questions."*

This was not only because **parents felt more secure to speak to teachers**, but also because there was improvement in the perception of teachers' attitudes towards the target group. A Belgian liaison officer shared: *"I noticed that a few teachers who previously were more critical or afraid of contact with parents, experienced that when you sit at a table together and hear the parents' side of the story, the contact with parents is not something to be afraid of, but that it also offers many advantages."*

The LCs allowed for a more open school culture, especially due to the **informal setting** in which they took place that helped bring parents and teachers closer.

A liaison officer at a primary school in Belgium said: *"I remember an incident during one of the sessions where a mother sat opposite the teacher of her child and very sincerely expressed her gratitude to the teacher for everything she had done for her child. I think this is often taken for granted, but for parents from a war-situation or with a migrant background this means a lot because the teacher is often the first person of trust for their child. It really was a beautiful moment because the mother spoke with a lot of emotion and straight from the heart and the teacher responded with the same amount of emotion, with tears in her eyes. These are small moments of joy that would not have been possible without SIREE because teachers otherwise are never with parents in the same informal setting. Usually, they have contact in a formal setting like parent-teacher meetings where they discuss the grade report. Because of the LCs there was also room for informal contact."*

A Belgian mother also commented: *"The relationships [with the teachers] are now more open. It is like we became friends, there is no barrier. It is like you know each other for years. You do know each other for years, but at school it is a different relationship."* In addition to better communication, improvements were also noticed with respect to participating in school, as parents were more often invited to activities that they had proposed.

These included serving fruit or helping with activities in the class of their children, but they also engaged more in already existing school activities. The LCs helped overcome some of the barriers concerning parents' participation as they were present to offer halal food and helped with low-key activities, such as painting children's faces for Halloween.

Parents who participated in the LCs indicated that the sessions gave them more insight in the school system and importantly, it increased their social networks as they met other parents. This sometimes happily resulted in new friendships. A mother in Belgium explained: *"I gained from the LCs a lot of friendship, for me that is the most important [aspect]."*

It also gave parents a good feeling the school wanted to put time and energy into getting to know them better and listening to them. Parents indicated their presence in the school and the classroom, either helping with activities such as reading or food distribution, or being there during the LC sessions, was experienced as *"a happy moment"* for themselves and their children. The benefits also reach beyond the school context, since **the LCs helped to build the bridge between the families, the schools and the broader context**. The target group, especially newcomers, generally have little knowledge about the local leisure activities or support networks. Aided by the LCs and external partners, schools helped them find their way with these local services. This has also resulted in new or revived partnerships between schools and local organisations and authorities.

As one facilitator in Belgium explained, broadening the school context and establishing partnerships is important for parents and the school *"to not have the feeling that they are on their own, but that the project is embraced by others"*. In other words, the partnerships increase the capacity to support the target group in and out of school.

CASE STUDY:

AN EXAMPLE OF HOW STUDENT VOICES CAN BE HEARD

How to create a better atmosphere for students and teachers in secondary schools.

School type: Secondary education

Country: Belgium

SIREE partner organisation: ARhus

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

MSKA and Burgerschool are both secondary schools located in the city centre of Roeselare. The first is part of the GO! Network and organises reception education and different tracks in the mainstream program, whereas the second is part of the Sint-Michiël group and only offers technical and vocational education. Both schools have a large number of pupils arriving from reception education as compared to other schools in Roeselare.

They struggle with a bad reputation carried from the past, which is reflected in the way their pupils are perceived by others, e.g. they are excluded from certain festivities that should be open to all pupils of the city such as prom night. Their engagement in the SIREE project was initially and mainly driven by the observation that many pupils have an opinion about or difficulties with their school that are never heard by their teachers, the school or somebody else. Both schools have a very diverse student population and want to bridge the gap between pupils and teachers, so it would be easier to pick up signals from the students.

INSTALLING THE FIRST LEARNING COMMUNITY (LC)

ARhus and the city of Roeselare were brainstorming about the opportunities SIREE could offer for the benefit of the pupils from MSKA and Burgerschool. Instead of restricting ourselves to a select group of students and teachers, we wanted to reach and question as many as possible. Accordingly, we piloted an extended Learning Community (LC) in two random classes at both schools, where teachers and pupils were separately questioned about their wellbeing, the quality of their classes and their relationship with each other. Due to the success, we decided to implement this in other classes during two consecutive days.

Every pupil received a letter from their class teachers, which explained the goal of the dialogue day and introduced the project staff of SIREE. Since the dialogue days took place during school hours we did not have any difficulties reaching the pupils. The practical organisation was taken care of by ARhus and colleagues from Groep Intro and youth workers from the City of Roeselare. Since Burgerschool has a student council, they were also involved in the organisation and lent us a hand during the dialogue days by asking pupils the questions, talking with them and helping them during the brainstorm. The days were organised at the skatepark, TRAX Roeselare, since most of the youngsters know this place and it is centrally located.

During the two days, every student and every teacher from the schools was questioned via Mentimeter – a presentation software app for lectures, seminars and training sessions. We made statements like: “I feel/don’t feel good at school”, or “I feel accepted by my school or peers”. In between the questions we discussed the answers more in depth. Following this, we had a brainstorm activity in groups of four to five students. Every group got to choose a predefined subject that they thought needed change.



Listening to the students and their ideas.

All their ideas were collected on large sheets of paper that we later summarised in a report and shared with the school principals, supporting personnel and teachers. This format was very successful since it provided plenty of information and ideas about how the school can do better for teachers and pupils, such as evaluate the sanctions policy or offer more recreation within the school walls. The next step was: how to transform these ideas into concrete actions.

PROGRESS OF THE SESSIONS

The group of participants changed every two hours, since we questioned every class from each school for two days. During these days, teachers were also involved and questioned. We chose to separate teachers from students as we wanted students to feel comfortable and be honest with us. Based on the report of the dialogue days it became clear that the sanctioning policy needed an evaluation. Students believed it was old-fashioned and not based on valid arguments.

By looking into it, we realised there is a stereotypical image of immigrant youngsters wearing tracksuits. Some pupils explained tracksuits are often cheaper than other clothes. Yet, both schools have strict rules about casual wear, which discriminate against low-income families who do not have the means to buy more expensive clothing. During the dialogue days we also came to the realisation there is ambiguousness among teachers when it comes to certain rules. Some teachers allow miniskirts, others do not. Some teachers have no problem with students drinking water during class, others threaten with punishments. Things like excessive make-up, fake nails and ripped jeans are also not welcome in school, while pupils see it as an experimental phase of their development. These are also things that help define their identity and allow them to feel like they belong somewhere. Since school is a place where you spend most of your time, students find it important to feel good, accepted and free to be themselves.

The biggest obstacle we bumped into was the fact students are often forgotten. When organising a meeting, they are rarely invited. Consequently, pupils do not feel they are taken seriously which had an impact on their participation during the dialogue days.

For some it was the first time they were asked to voice their opinion about the school, and many had little confidence that anything would actually happen with their input. One student who was asked why he did not want to participate answered: *"You can't do anything for us! Nobody listens to what we say anyways."*

This attitude was most common among students from the third grade up. Since they had the longest experience in school, they had become a little demotivated to participate. Apart from the fact they were not interested, we had difficulties to connect with them and noticed that peer pressure had a big influence on their willingness to cooperate. Some

were showing off or gave "funny" responses to our questions. As a group, earning their trust was a big task. But when we had one-to-one conversations during the brainstorm, the responses to our questions were more sincere. For example, when we asked a student what he meant by "no unfair punishments anymore" he told us sometimes teachers punish him when he is innocent. That makes him show more deviant behaviour and he often refuses to do his punishment duties. *"The more they punish me, the worse my behaviour gets"*, he said.

During the discussion of the brainstorm he told us teachers should talk to troublesome students more instead of sanctioning them for no reason. We also experienced an obstacle when trying to connect with girls from certain ethno-cultural communities. They found it easier to confide in our colleague who has a migrant background. Because we wanted to include their opinion, we offered to have an extra meeting with them during school hours and lunch breaks. Unfortunately, they kindly declined and wished no longer to be part of certain activities.

WHAT FACTORS FACILITATED THE PROGRESS?

We had the privilege to work with very motivated teachers and other staff in both schools. They were aware of the mistakes they sometimes made and were open to receive feedback. Since youth workers from ARhus and colleagues from Groep Intro had a lot of experience working with youngsters, their advice was taken seriously.

There is still some work to do but the willingness and motivation of the school is very pleasant to work with. It was also a huge help to work with a diverse group of colleagues who, from their expertise, were a positive addition to the project. The people from Groep Intro were already familiar with the schools, and their pupils thanks to their own projects and presence in the schools.

The youth workers from ARhus connected easily with the students since most had heard of them or followed them on social media ([HACK](#) – a youth work project ARhus run). One of the youth workers had a migration background, making it easier to connect with the pupils who had a similar background. Like there are prejudgements about immigrants, immigrants have prejudgements about native Belgians. Therefore, in LCs, having the target group represented among colleagues can create an extra added value.



ACTIONS

Following the pupil's recommendations in the report, the initiatives below were taken.

Action 1: Reform of sanctions policy

The school personnel of the Burgerschool listened to the arguments of the students and agreed that it was time for an update. Class hours were dedicated to brainstorm sessions with pupils. Certain bad behaviour was matched with the correct sanction based on the "4-layer model", a model that helps teachers find the right sanctions for certain bad behaviour and operate in a correct but human way.

After some meetings with the school staff and other stakeholders it was decided that the new sanction policy will be implemented in the school year of 2021-2022.

Action 2: Diversity festival "B-land"

Based on the report Burgerschool's student council came with the idea of organising a diversity festival, B-land, where all kinds of workshops would be offered to learn more about the culture of pupils with a migration background. Activities such as learning some new words in Romanian, Russian or Moroccan, dressing up in traditional clothing or learning dance were meant to celebrate diversity inside the school. Pupils and the school staff were involved in the working groups where brainstorms took place (Annex 1). Unfortunately, due to Covid-19, the festival was cancelled.

Action 3: School party

MSKA also wanted to organise an end-of-the-year school party for all the students. During a "dialogue day" students could give input among other aspects about the music, workshops and food (Annex 2). Those interested could write their name on a list so that we could add them on the previously made closed groups on Facebook. Because of Covid-19, the possibilities of a virtual festival are being explored.

Action 4: Diverse student council

The student council of Burgerschool was traditionally "elitist and white", but since the first dialogue days it became more diverse and more accessible for new members from all kinds of backgrounds. Before, the student council chose who was welcomed as new members. Nowadays, everyone can be a candidate and become a student counsellor, regardless of who you are and where you come from. They are welcomed and there are no difficulties working together since they do it already at school.



THE ADDED VALUE OF THE LC SESSIONS

The project was put on hold just before the coronavirus crisis and the LC meetings were finalised. Both schools already confirmed the continuation of the project for the next school year (2020-2021). Given all the circumstances, it is too soon to make a proper evaluation of the impact on the involved parents and pupils. It is however clear that the schools did manage to shift their focus from parental involvement to pupil involvement.

2.8.2 A sustainable approach?

One of the worries of every socially relevant project is what happens once the project ends, so we wanted to know how sustainable the LC approach is for the future. Thanks to the success of the project and the many benefits that school staff experienced with it (see section 2.8.1) **most of the schools expressed that they would like to continue with the LCs, although the format may be slightly changed.**

For instance, in one of the schools the LCs will be transferred to Dutch conversation groups where parents, volunteers and a liaison officer help newcomer parents learn the language, while they talk about the school and other important life issues such as health or work. The motivation to give the voice of parents a more permanent place in the school was explained by the school director: *"We need parents that is why we want to continue the LCs, because we noticed that there is a need."* Another primary school director in Belgium added she does not only want to continue conversations, but to also reach concrete actions: *"We want to continue the conversation tables where a topic is discussed and both parents and teachers are heard, and where you feel that an idea is formed, a solution is sought for a problem, where also concrete actions are developed; for our school, that was most valuable."*

Working together with external partners from the beginning facilitates the continuation of the LCs after the project ends. A facilitator in Belgium said:

"It is very important to involve other partners in your project, because then you are not on your own and there is continuity when the project ends. We did not only focus on parents and the school, but a complete network was installed." Schools already working together with parents before the project said having an LC helped improve the existing collaboration, which they intend to continue in the future.



Cards created to inform newcomer pupils about local support networks in the area.

A liaison officer at a Belgian school shared: *"Our school already worked closely together with parents, but by structuring and planning everything a bit more and by organising it at specific times, I feel we have thrown a few stones in the water that made the river take a different direction."*

Sustainable actions were implemented that will continue after the project. This involves for instance a set of cards and resource guide informing newcomer students about the support networks, or K-bas story bags (see City of Mechelen case study). **By creating effective, lasting actions and changes to the school functioning, parents, students, schools, and external partners will be motivated to continue the bonds with each other.**

2.9 Resources

A huge benefit of running the LCs was the gathering of information through interviews and focus groups, which produced an online toolbox and a new teacher training guide. In the framework of WP1 (work package 1 – the education section of SIREE chapters 2 and 3) an exchange between teaching staff from participating schools was also organised, which are described in the following sections.

2.9.1 Online toolbox

The lessons we derived from organising the SIREE project LCs with newcomers in schools are available through an online toolbox (<https://www.siree.eu/educators-toolbox>). Designed for educators and other interested parties, it provides practical tools to use across different methodological session approaches, which can be used co-creatively with newcomer students and parents during LC meetings.

The first category has tools that can be used in every kind of LC session, concerning the four phases of the Double Diamond. These tools are mainly applicable for introducing a session, for instance icebreakers and getting to know participants, or to finish and evaluate a LC session with exit slips. A second category offers tools which fit the methodological session approaches that accompany the discover phase of a LC. These tools particularly support methods for analysing challenges and opportunities that relate to the initial issues with which the LC started.

Thirdly, next come the define phase tools that mainly help to let participants prioritise the discussed topics, and let them democratically select which topic to proceed with during the next phase of the LC. Regarding this next phase of develop, the toolbox presents ways to generate a range of ideas for action taking, and for selecting a preferred action. Finally, tools are incorporated that belong to the deliver phase of a LC. These support the process of action development, action implementation, and action evaluation.

2.9.2 Teacher training

The SIREE partners have also developed a teaching module for pre-service teachers. In this module, **the goal is to strengthen and prepare future teachers to work in an intercultural and diverse teaching context.**

The teacher module is grounded in several learning outcomes:

- Consciousness about how migration alters the education system
- Knowledge about the challenges in education faced by newcomers
- Teaching with a culturally sensitive attitude
- Collaborating and involving parents and the local community
- Supporting second language learning
- Creating a safe learning environment
- Developing culturally sensitive learning materials

For more information about the teacher module, we refer to Chapter 3.

2.9.3 Teacher training: workshops for in-service teachers

Within WP1, we did not only want to develop learning outcomes and a study programme for teacher education. It was considered just as vital to address teachers in the professional field, for the duration and after the SIREE project. That is why a series of lectures/workshops for this target group were developed and implemented. The target was for 12 workshops, which was four workshops per country.

Interested schools or organisations could request the SIREE partners to host a workshop on the topic of inclusive education for newcomers. The choice of contents was informed by the initial research (see section 2.2), the themes, dialogues and action plans of the LCs in the schools (see section 2.6), as well as the learning outcomes for the teacher training (see section 2.9.2 and Chapter 3).

This resulted in a wide range of themes and a total of 23 scheduled workshops of which two were cancelled as a result of Covid-19 restrictions, reaching 316 teachers by the end of 2020. Table 2.2 provides an overview of the workshops. Where possible, a switch was made to online teaching or webinars. Almost all workshops were also open to teachers at non-participating schools.

Table 2.2: Key themes, number of workshops, venue and target group.

Key theme	#	Venue	Target group
Netherlands (University College Roosevelt – UCR)			
Parent involvement and newcomers	2	Middelburg	Zeeland Education Day in Middelburg
Social-emotional learning (SEL) and multilingualism	2	Online conference	Teachers
Belgium (VIVES, City of Mechelen, House of Learning)			
Open for diversity	1	Kortrijk	Teachers of VIVES University of Applied Sciences, during “VIVES pro-dag”
Halal/Haram	1	Mechelen	Teachers SIREE schools Mechelen
Street culture	1	Mechelen	Teachers of second grade
School without racism	1	Brugge	Study day for teachers (internship mentors) of primary education schools West Flanders
Challenges for newcomers	1	Kortrijk	Study day for teachers (internship mentors) of primary education schools West Flanders
How diversity changes schools and teachers?	2	Brugge (online)	Teachers/students bachelor after bachelor’s in education: broadening care and remedial learning Course: Actual themes in education
Challenges for newcomers	2	Brugge (online)	Teachers/students bachelor after bachelor’s in education: broadening care and remedial learning Course: Actual themes in education
How to involve migrant parents?	2	Brugge (online)	Teachers/students bachelor after bachelor’s in education: broadening care and remedial learning Course: Actual themes in education

Table 2.2: Key themes, number of workshops, venue and target group.

Key theme	#	Venue	Target group
How to create a safe learning environment?	2	Brugge (online)	Teachers/students bachelor after bachelor's in education: broadening care and remedial learning Course: Actual themes in education
Intercultural craftsmanship	2	Brugge (online)	Teachers/students bachelor after bachelor's in education: broadening care and remedial learning Course: Actual themes in education
UK (Medway Plus)			
Life Skills and Learning Resources for teaching young unaccompanied asylum-seeking children	2	Medway	Teachers of the local Medway schools hosting LCs

2.9.4 Teacher mobility

To maximise the learning effect of the project, teacher mobility was organised for Belgian teachers. In March 2020, seven teachers and five staff members of partner organisations visited one of the participating schools as well as a reception centre. They were introduced to the vision and functioning of the school, as well as their partnerships with external organisations.

They also received information about the organisation of the LCs and there was room for questions and discussion where teachers exchanged experiences and approaches. At the reception centre information was given about the asylum procedure, which was concluded with a short guided tour.

This exchange helped to gain insights into new methods to welcome newcomers into school and to understand that basic needs should be fulfilled before learning can take place, as well as to classify children in the right level. It also underlined the importance of the bridge figure and that to keep parents actively involved it is necessary to invest in informal contacts and use clear communication.

Teachers indicated however that what works well for one school does not necessarily work in another, and that it is important to customise actions to their own context. They appreciated the exchange and emphasised the need for regular contact between schools. They also considered it vital to learn about the LCs in other schools as well as the organisation of classes for newcomers including how often to evaluate them, a concrete action plan, the cooperation with a regular class, and new working methods.

Another exchange that was planned for April and May 2020 between teachers from Belgium, the UK and the Netherlands was cancelled as a result of Covid-19 restrictions.

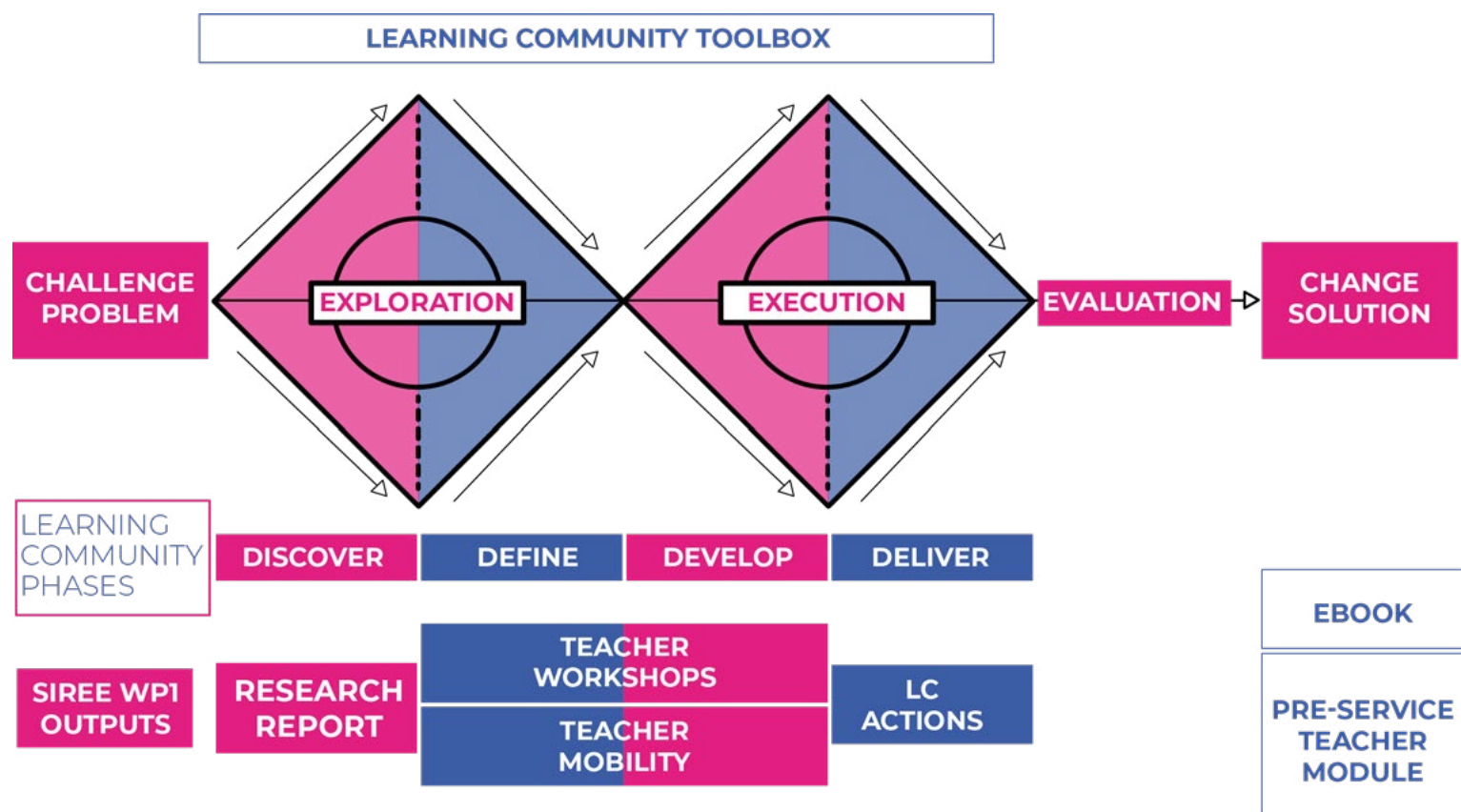


Figure 2.12: Key themes, number of workshops, venue and target group.

2.10 Conclusions

An important question that we are confronted with today is how we can overcome ethnic inequality within our educational systems. The barriers are numerous and interact in complex ways between the individual, school, and systemic level. One of the mistakes when searching for solutions to these obstacles is advice is often sought from the top down, while the involvement and perspectives of those who the solutions apply to are not involved.

We believe that involvement and shared responsibility of all actors is the first stepping stone to really overcome some of the issues at stake. In this chapter we introduced LCs as a promising practice to tackle the barriers for newcomers in an educational context. Departing from the design thinking approach and the concept of co-creation, the LCs allow for the incorporation of the voices of refugees in making schools more inclusive institutions. They are spaces where different participants are stimulated to have sincere interest and respectful attention for each other's cultures, beliefs and actions. Where people really listen to each other and enter into dialogue about relevant issues that might hinder the educational integration on any possible level.

Importantly, the LCs are more than mere talking groups. By following the phases of the Double Diamond that is inherent to the design thinking approach, the identified obstacles move in co-creation towards real-life solutions that are immediately beneficial for those involved. Although the LCs were implemented in different educational levels and with different kinds, and took different forms within the project, we could discern important commonalities that help us move the methodology further of LCs as a promising practice for inclusive school making processes.

This chapter provided a thorough overview of crucial elements of the LCs in general, and for working with parents and students of newcomer background in an educational setting in particular. These included the need for schools to be real and engaged partners, creating an informal setting where all participants feel at ease, tackling the language barrier and stimulating motivation and participation. For those who are interested in setting up a LC, we have created a detailed guide to install them with many practical tips. This can help overcome some of the obstacles we ourselves have experienced while facilitating the LCs, as well as an online toolbox where participative methods can be consulted.



The evaluations of the LCs show there is something in it for every participant. The LCs help vulnerable groups feel heard, acknowledged, and recognised, and they increase their sense of belonging at school and ownership in school making processes. It also helps staff to learn about the needs of vulnerable groups that they sometimes find hard to reach, which leads to new actions and activities. Importantly, they do not only positively impact those directly involved. A change in perceptions of teachers' attitudes towards the target group, reducing barriers, getting to know each other's motives and life worlds, helps to overcome distance in parent-teacher and student-teacher relationships.

Literally sitting together at the table reduces the distance, not only physically but also emotionally, which facilitates communication, understanding and respect for each other. The LCs provide a chance to meet, listen and grow understanding for each

other's positions. The impact may go far beyond this as the dialogues initiated and the actions implemented help overcome negative perceptions about "the other", increase the cultural, social, and human resources of vulnerable parents and students, and generally allow for inclusive environments to be created where everyone feels at home. It helps even in times of crisis, such as the current pandemic, to stay connected as a result of the warm relationships built up. Finally, the LCs allow both schools and individual participants to grow their social and support networks.



Stimulating dialogue and working together to create an inclusive learning environment does not end with the project. This is and should be an ongoing process where we have created a starting point, and for which we have given tools to school teams to continue on their own. We have heard from many schools that the benefits they experienced over the course of the project has stimulated them to continue the sessions with parents and students. This shows schools have experienced and valued the importance of hearing everyone's voice, especially those who are harder to reach. We do not pretend that LCs solve everything.

School teams should continue to focus on professionalisation, a diverse teaching team and adapting policy to the ongoing changing school population, just as policymakers must continue to reform policies in such a way that it favours, not hinders, the educational integration of newcomers.

Such issues that go beyond the heads of parents and students – and often also teachers or directors – cannot be tackled by the LCs. But what they can do is identify and address challenges on a school level that have been avoided in the past, or not recognised as such, and draw a positive story about ethnic and cultural diversity in which everyone bears a responsibility. On a practical level, the inclusive learning environments created through this process are important stepping stones to a diploma, and the development of a professional career and full citizenship. On a personal level, the LCs have offered the chance for students and parents to feel confident, happy and ready for the world and their new lives.

SIREE In Action

Before reading Chapter 3 watch a video from the SIREE in Action series on the project's YouTube channel called **This is one mother's wish for the future**, on why collaboration between teachers and parents is vital to make refugee and migrant children feel welcome.



3 Teacher Training Modules

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Foreword

This chapter presents the development of a teachers' education module preparing future primary education teachers to respond to the needs of newcomer children – with a special focus on young refugees. After a brief justification of the need for such modules, an analysis of literature and empirical data will be used to inform the learning objectives. In the second part, we will present two examples of the teachers' education programmes working towards these objectives, which were developed within the SIREE project in the Netherlands and Belgium. In addition a preliminary evaluation of one of these courses is included.

3.1.2 Young migrants in education and their achievements

According to Eurostat (European Statistical Office) in 2016 there were 35.1 million people born outside the EU-28 living in an EU member state. In Belgium, Germany, Luxemburg, Austria, Ireland, Latvia, Estonia, and Cyprus more than 10% of the population consisted of non-nationals.

Educational attainment of people living in the EU is clearly related to their immigrant status. The Eurostat report on migrant integration in the EU-28 member states demonstrates that in the age group 25-54 years, divided by the immigrant status into native-born, foreign-born, EU-born and non-EU born, the non-EU born population had the highest proportion of people who did not exceed lower secondary education (35%)¹⁴, compared to 18% of the native born and 20% of the EU-born population (Eurostat, 2020).

The lag in educational attainment arguably carries on into the job market, according to European Commission (EC) data on the share of people in the age group of 15-29 neither in employment nor in education. The data shows the percentage of unemployed and not following education is the highest among non-EU born migrants and the lowest in the native-born population. In 2019, 11.8% of the native population was unemployed and not enrolled in education or training, but this figure was higher for the non-EU born population at 21.7%. Back in 2009 this difference was far larger, at 13.9% and 26.6% respectively. Job integration seems to be improving, however this development stagnated over the past three years (Eurostat, 2020).

In some EU countries the disparities are larger than elsewhere. In the Netherlands for example, the growing number of newcomers¹⁵ in special primary education are three times more likely to go to lower forms of secondary education compared to other pupils (State of Education, 2020). Also, Belgium (Flanders) faces some challenges in creating quality education for every child. In 2018, among Flemish schools' students 34.6% of non-Belgian nationals and 42.1% of those who had a non-EU nationality faced one or more years of delay in the final year of regular primary education. Compared to this statistic, only 12.8% of native students faced a similar delay (Departement Onderwijs and Vorming, 2020).

¹⁴ i.e. only pre-primary, primary or lower secondary education.

¹⁵ Newcomers are students with a refugee and/or migration background, who are not yet fluent in the Dutch language and who attend a Dutch school for the first time.

Children with migrant backgrounds, non-native speakers and lower socio-economic status are often put into in the same schools, the so-called “concentration schools”, while other schools attract Dutch-speaking children with higher socio-economic status. The differences in school population or type of students attending clearly lead to contrasting learning outcomes.

PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) results show that despite education outcomes in Flanders scoring relatively high in the ranking on average, the gap between the students with the highest grades and the ones with the lowest grades in the ranking is the largest in the world (OECD, 2018; Vlaamse Onderwijsraad, 2018). Due to lack of preparation, information and school policy towards migrant children, those who are intelligent but cannot express themselves well enough in Dutch can be sent to special education where they receive personalised training aimed at pupils with difficulties in learning.

The situation of the migrant children depends, to a large degree on the school policy and the teachers, as they can influence the development of the child. The superdiversity in society and inclusive education challenges teachers in their work. Teachers in the field often feel they are not qualified to meet the needs of every child in their classroom. Ideas and convictions on diversity and inclusion influence the teachers’ daily practice (Vlaamse Onderwijsraad, 2018). This situation needs to be assessed and changed to enable teachers and their students to thrive in the classroom.

3.1.3 Relevance of preparation of the teachers

This naturally demonstrates the need for teachers who can provide education suitable for migrant students. Also, there is a need for contemporary teaching materials (Education Council, 2017). In the Netherlands, this requires increased professionalisation for trainee teachers and all current teachers (Leeuwenstein and Bokhorst, 2019). In both Belgium and the Netherlands, there is a limited supply of education that prepares trainee teachers to face superdiverse classrooms, which include substantial numbers of newcomer and immigrant children new to the host country and often with limited knowledge of its language. Within the Dutch curricula of Teacher Primary Education programme (Pabo), little or no attention is paid to newcomer education for teachers preparing for primary schools.

To our best knowledge, before the SIREE project in the Netherlands, courses preparing teachers to work with newcomer children were not part of basic teachers’ preparation, and offered only to schoolteachers with a bachelor’s degree as part of lifelong learning.

Only teachers who had already obtained their bachelor’s degree and work, could follow additional, optional training in the field of language development, arithmetic, reading comprehension, social-emotional learning, or trauma (LOWAN, 2020). This included the opportunity for seven courses on Dutch as a second language (NT2) with a study period of six to twenty hours, three courses on NT2 and Multilingualism (15 hours), and four courses on trauma (between three and 12 hours) (LOWAN, 2020). Within the Flemish curricula of Teacher Education for Primary Schools there was already ample attention given to didactics of language teaching (Dutch and French), and there is a basic program for didactics NT2. In recent years, NT2 has become an even more important topic in the education of teachers. Practicing teachers in primary or secondary education can take the extra as a year-long course of educational training with Dutch as a non-native language at most university colleges in Flanders. For instance, University College Odisee offers a postgraduate course that welcomes education for newcomers who speak a foreign language.

3.2 Needs assessment: what competences do teachers need to support newcomer children?

3.2.1 Introduction

The disadvantaged situations of immigrant, newcomer children, and refugee children, in particular¹⁶ in the educational context can be improved by interventions aimed at different levels. Starting at the level of the whole society, it can be done through the adjustments of the education system and policy, community level interventions, individual school policy changes, and lastly and importantly at individual teacher level.

The teacher preparation course is primarily for future teachers who will start, or have just recently started their professional career, and vitally are “on the ground” in direct contact with young people. In order to make a difference, teachers have to be equipped with competences¹⁷ needed to provide a good educational experience to students (Pinson and Arnot, 2017). Individual teacher’s competences can also influence higher levels of the school system including school policies. The availability of teachers who possess the necessary competences make the implementation of school policies more likely.

For a new teacher, competences in the direct engagement with students and parents in an educational context are the most important. These were chosen to be the learning goals of the modules, which are either complimentary to the existing basic teacher’s education programme, taught in addition to or augmenting the programme with elements crucial for catering to the needs of newcomer children. For this reason, there was a focus on competences which are particularly relevant in the context of newcomer education.

To find the right set of competences we conducted several studies and consolidated their results. In some studies, we asked directly about these competences, but also asked questions about the issues and barriers experienced by newcomer students and parents.

To generate the set of learning objectives we:

- Conducted a literature review of existing studies pertaining to the subject, indicating issues and competences
- Analysed an extensive set of group discussions, including parents and teachers from the Netherlands, Belgium, and the UK to identify issues faced by newcomers, as well as individual and group interviews with parents, educators, and policymakers across all involved countries
- Conducted focus group interviews with teacher preparation institutions’ personnel

16 OCW, 2020; OECD, 2016, 2018

OECD. (2016). Netherlands 2016: Foundations for the future. Paris: OECD Publishing.

OECD. (2018). The Resilience of Students with an Immigrant Background: Factors that Shape Wellbeing. OECD Reviews of Migrant Education. Paris: OECD Publishing.

17 As competence has various meanings, it is a term we assume definition of competence as a combination of knowledge, abilities and skills and attitudes (Gonczi et al., 1990). Knowledge refers to the know how needed to perform a task. Skill implies being able to perform specific tasks, skill is acquired through experience but not necessarily requires training. Skill is often confused with ability, yet ability is explained as the potential one has to reach a goal or execute an activity. The final component of competence is attitude, this part has to do with emotion and captures a person’s willingness (Winterton, 2006).

In the next section we will briefly present the results of the studies, followed by the set of learning objectives developed and informed using the Delphi method – a systematic, interactive way of gathering opinions from independent experts over several sessions.

3.2.2 Literature review indicating teachers' competences

In order to identify the competences teachers needed to improve education in multicultural classrooms, a systematic search with predefined search strings was conducted using the Educational Resources Information Centre (ERIC) database restricted to papers published in the last 20 years. After reviewing the first 100 papers, sorted on relevance, 15 met a relevance criterion. An additional search was conducted on PsycINFO database, which resulted in four additional relevant publications. The review revealed four main categories of challenges which are likely to be faced by newcomers at school. These are language barriers, detrimental situational factors, emotional vulnerability and cultural barriers. **Table 3.1** shows the impacts of these challenges, the activities that can be used to address them and the competences required.

Table 3.1: *Challenges, impacts, activities, and competences.*

Challenges	Impacts	Activities to address challenge	Competences
Language Barriers	Limited communication between teachers and students and vitally also between teachers and newcomer parents alike	Teachers can strengthen their capacity to communicate with people who are not fluent in the host country language on one hand, on the other engage in improving language fluency of their students	Communication competence Competence to teach a language
Detrimental Situation Factors	Economic hardship, involves lack of stability, and interruption of education due to both the migration process and the status of newcomers, particularly refugees	To respond to the needs in a flexible way, by adjusting adopting materials, class activities, and demands to respond to unique needs of their newcomer students related to their different knowledge base, situation, and cultural background	Emotional competency e.g. listening, empathy and building appropriate relationships with students
Emotional Vulnerability	Displacement, might be further aggravated by trauma experienced by many refugees	Being aware of such students, creating a safe environment for them, help them to cope with it, and refer further if need be	Competency to foster social and emotional development of students, and help them to cope
Cultural Barriers	Not only express themselves in the difference between cultural assumptions and norms between newcomers and host countries, but even more importantly , by lack of implicit practical knowledge settings, expectations and institutions that are taken for granted by a host population	Develop materials and adapt them to make them understandable and effective for students from different cultural backgrounds, teach topics in an interdisciplinary manner and address issues from different perspectives	Competency to adapt teaching (style, material, and activities) such as cultural competency, open-mindedness and flexibility

3.2.3 Content analysis of topics discussed at Learning Communities' (LCs) group meetings

To gather empirical data on the challenges that newcomers face, we analysed topics brought up in the Learning Communities (LCs) organised in Belgium, the UK and the Netherlands, which are profiled in Chapter 2. The information discussed in the LCs was documented through standardised forms, which were analysed through a selective inductive content analysis. The data from these forms was coded and organised, and **Table 3.2** sets out the results. The main learning objectives for teachers were derived from coding the meaningful phrases related to the teacher's competence.

Table 3.2: Results of content analysis of Learning Communities' meetings protocols: Barriers newcomers face, solutions, and competences to address them according to stakeholders.

Barrier category	Solutions	Competences
Language barriers between students with a migration background and the teachers, education materials and fellow students, e.g. students do not understand their teacher or what is explained (11 mentions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create more opportunities for students to learn the local language - Use of a translator or translation tools - Play together with native-born children - Learn other languages - Multilingual teachers - Multilingual communication of important messages - More focus on scientific subjects for students with limited native language 	Communicative competence and the competence to teach students a new language
Teachers do not sufficiently understand and consider the situation newcomers are in (11 mentions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take individual situation and characteristics into account - More support for children on diverse levels - Mutual support - Insight into educational trajectories of newcomers - Homework support 	Emotionally and communicatively competent in order to find out more about the students and respond in an appropriate manner

Barrier category	Solutions	Competences
Cultural barrier (18 mentions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers should take cultural differences into account when thinking about the way they explain materials and manage the classroom - Teachers should use materials that can be understood by everyone in the classroom and are definitely not offensive - Clear explicit rules consequently and consistently applied - Family-based approach - Rules should be made explicit before expected to be observed - Respect cultural diversity and demonstrate flexibility 	Teachers need cultural competence in addition to the mastery of flexible teaching methods
Psychological vulnerability (12 mentions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students need a safe, respectful environment where they can express themselves and feel comfortable to make mistakes - Stability of class - Psychological support 	Teachers need communicative, pedagogical, and emotional competence
Hard to be involved with their children's education for parents with a migration background (11 mentions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parent-teacher communication needs to be improved especially in terms of progress of their children - Parents more involved - Specific examples are talking to parents at the start of the class day, informing parents of the school culture, communicating a year overview and staying in touch is easiest when teachers speak English - Events for parents 	Communicative and cultural competence

Table 3.2: Results of content analysis of Learning Communities' meetings protocols: Barriers newcomers face, solutions, and competences to address them according to stakeholders.

The results of the interviews with stakeholders aligned well with the results of the systematic literature review. **The results of the content analysis showed there is a need for multilingual teachers and interpreters at schools to ensure that the language barrier between students and teachers does not block the educational progression of pupils.** The teachers need excellent communication competency to involve parents and stimulate their participation, and to be able to learn about the circumstances of these students. The communication between teachers and students requires appropriate emotional and pedagogical competencies, as newcomer students all have individual concerns and come from different situations that the teachers often do not sufficiently understand. To overcome barriers of cultural differences teachers must be able to establish explicit class rules, while respecting cultural diversity at the same time as using educational materials in the topics they discuss in classes. The LCs helped inform the module. "The logs and analysis of the audio recordings of the LCs have helped describe practical experiences to strengthen the theory that was offered during the module."

3.2.4 Questionnaire in Pabo

We conducted a survey using a snowball sample – a sample study where participants recommend others to take part as in a snowball effect – of 17 teachers from ethnically diverse schools, which receive trainees from the Pabo course at Inholland University in Rotterdam wanting to gain experience in newcomer education and their relationships.

The questionnaire included:

- 1)** What do new teachers working with newcomers need (more than new regular teachers)?
 - in the field of language acquisition
 - in the field of social-emotional learning (SEL)
 - in the field of cooperation with parents
- 2)** Which skills do you think new teachers of newcomers would like to expand?
- 3)** Which competences and skills do new teachers need the most?
- 4)** What knowledge do new teachers of newcomers want to expand?
- 5)** What knowledge helps new teachers the most?

The responses of the survey show which skills respondents found relevant for new teachers in newcomer education: (from most important to less important) to know how to teach Dutch as a second language (12), pedagogical competences (8), didactic competences (6), know to create a safe climate (4), have knowledge of the social-emotional learning (4) and have organisational competences (4). Responses also included be flexible (3), keep in touch with the parents (3), have knowledge of trauma (3), have knowledge of languages (3) have knowledge of various cultures (3), have empathy (2), have knowledge of the learning trajectories (1), be capable to align (1), have a positive attitude (1) and be inventive (1).

Issues	Forms of support
Identifying support for newcomer students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognising that: “It is a difficult process” • Lack of suitable resources • Language barriers
Language teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problems about expanding vocabulary • How to adjust existing methods • Learning from other schools and teachers • Teachers should be aware of the example they set
Social-emotional learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse teams would be best • Teachers with an interest in other cultures needed • Teachers need knowledge of trauma
Parental contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise that parents know their children best • Be aware parents often do not know about the educational system • Not be offended if parents treat the teacher differently • Be open and honest • Make parents feel welcome • Cooperation is best in specific concrete areas coupled with empathy and the right information

Table 3.3: *Issues identified and forms of support needed.*

3.2.5 Focus groups

In the Netherlands, seven teachers experienced in educating newcomers participated in a focus group interview. These teachers or respondents worked at a Language Expertise Center, a superdiverse primary school and an Asielzoekerscentrum or Asylum Seekers' Center (AZC) school. Respondents had between seven and 28 years of experience in newcomer education. Some have also completed the training, Dutch as a second language (NT2), or training about trauma. They were asked what knowledge and skills new teachers needed to provide education to newcomers in the field of second language acquisition, social-emotional learning (SEL) (including trauma) and parental involvement.

What teachers need	To know how to teach Dutch as a second language
	To be able to create a safe environment
	To be flexible
	To keep in touch with parents
	An understanding of the consequences of trauma
	To have a positive attitude
	To learn by daring and doing

Table 3.4: *Results of focus group interviews.*

The respondents think teachers in newcomer education do not need other competences as teachers in regular education, but they do think there is a greater demand for specific pedagogical, didactic, organisational, and interpersonal competences. This is in line with a survey conducted by Eindhoven, School of Education on behalf of LOWAN (Van Vijfeijken and Van Schilt-Mol, 2012).

3.2.6 Needs assessment interviews – content analysis of interviews Netherlands

In the Netherlands, a series of 12 interviews both done with individuals and group-based were conducted with stakeholders. The interviews touched upon several topics including competences teachers of newcomer students needed to possess. The interviews were conducted with three teachers, two trajectory supervisors, an internal officer, a career officer, a director and a team leader of specific language acquisition classes and schools, as well as a parent and child who attends such classes/schools. Information that came out of these interviews included the methods and actions that teachers were recommended to take and how the barriers affecting newcomer students could be addressed by teachers. The content analysis of these interviews is found in Appendix 3.3.

3.2.7 Conclusion: Learning objectives for newcomers' education

Using the results of this research, the Delphi method was used to generate nine learning objectives for the module, which would prepare new teachers to provide education in a primary school to newcomer pupils in the best way.

The learning objectives below constitute a foundation of the later learning modules, which were implemented in professional teachers' education institutes. The objectives became learning outcomes to be achieved by student teachers, participating in the programmes implementing the module.

The student teachers should have:

- 1)** Awareness of the current position of refugees and migrants in the educational system of the host country, and understand the importance of education for the emancipation and social integration of refugees and migrants
- 2)** Basic expertise as a teacher of second language (of the host country) for newcomers and is able to teach in a multilingual context
- 3)** The ability to provide subject education in a diverse class adapted to the educational needs of pupils in a culturally sensitive manner
- 4)** The ability to develop or adapt culturally sensitive lesson material/curriculum

- 5) An understanding of how to facilitate a safe educational environment for displaced young people (newcomers), with special attention to observing and reacting to trauma and referring to professional aid workers
- 6) Awareness of how to involve immigrant parents
- 7) A basic background knowledge and ability to find in-depth details about migration in the host country: common origins of migrants; political and social situation of the countries of origin and internal diversity in these countries, cultural background of main migrant groups and internal diversity of them, national and international legal framework (e.g. UN resolution), legal regulations and constraints affecting migrants. What organisations are involved with the reception of newcomers? How is reception education organised? What is the legal framework?
- 8) Awareness of specific challenges newcomers face and is able to act upon this within the class, school, and local environment (e.g. displacement, lack of insight into expectations and settings of educational system taken for granted by locals, language barrier, social networks and isolation, perceived discrimination in support, trust, challenges of host culture)
- 9) Awareness and ability to acknowledge the importance of community collaboration and co-creation in education in the context of newcomers' education

3.3 Methodologies

3.3.1 Methodology of teaching – course structure and content Netherlands

The pilot implementation of the learning module aimed at the nine learning outcomes (see 3.2.7) were determined in collaboration between University College Roosevelt (UCR) in the Netherlands and Hogeschool VIVES in Belgium, and planned to take place as part of the Pabo (Teacher Primary Education) qualification at Inholland University of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands. After consultation with the curriculum committee, the management of Inholland decided the contents of the module would be offered as a **Newcomers Education minor** for third-year students of the BA teachers' education program in the elective part of the study. Also, that it would be incorporated into a continuous professional development post-bachelor course for teachers.

Educational minor

The Newcomers Education module at Inholland University of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands had learning outcomes that were linked to three main minor subjects:

- 1) Language acquisition and multilingualism
- 2) Social-emotional learning (including trauma)
- 3) Parental involvement

The minor Newcomers Education module consisted of 11 teaching days. The days included morning lessons about language development and multilingualism, and afternoon lessons in which social-emotional learning and parental involvement were the main subjects. The most important learning outcome in morning lessons was: *"The student has basic knowledge as a teacher of the second language (of the host country) for newcomers."* In the afternoon lessons, students worked on the other eight learning outcomes. They gave presentations after exploring the theory of one of the central topics. To support them in this, the students were given questions and tips regarding the relevant literature.

The presentations were attended by all students, so that there was knowledge sharing among peers. Due to Covid-19, the presentations were filmed or recorded at home and shared online. Finally, during the teaching days, there was also an opportunity to guide the students in their design research. They conducted research on language acquisition, social-emotional learning or parental involvement based on a needs assessment at the school where they worked or did an internship. Although several learning outcomes were worked on during all classes, one of the learning outcomes was explicitly offered during the lessons in the afternoon. The learning outcome about language acquisition and multilingualism was central to all morning classes. This was an emphatic wish of Inholland, partly in view of the students' needs for more knowledge about language acquisition among newcomers. The other learning outcomes are linked to the following lessons and topics in **Table 3.5**.

Lesson	Subject	Learning outcomes number
1	Support needs and forms of education	1. The student is aware of the place of refugees and migrants in the education system of the host country, and understands the importance of education for the emancipation and social integration of those refugees and migrants
2	Social-emotional learning (SEL)	5. The student knows how to facilitate a safe educational environment for displaced young people (newcomers)
3	Parent involvement	6. The student can/knows how to involve immigrant parents
4	Culturally sensitive teaching	3. The student teaches from a culturally sensitive attitude
5	Background knowledge of migration countries	7. The student has the basic background knowledge of and is able to find more in-depth knowledge of migration in the host country e.g. common origin of migrants, political and social situation of the countries of origin and internal diversity in these countries, cultural background of the main migrant groups and their internal diversity, legal framework national and international regulations (e.g. UN resolution) and restrictions for migrants
6	Tailoring SEL lessons to support needs	8. The student is aware of the specific challenges of newcomers (e.g. displacement, lack of understanding of expectations and settings of the education system taken for granted by the local population, language barrier, social networks and isolation, perceived discrimination support, trust, challenges of the host culture)
7	Developing culturally sensitive teaching material	4. The student is able to develop culturally sensitive teaching material (adapting the curriculum)

Lesson	Subject	Learning outcomes number
8	Parent involvement	9. The student is aware of the importance of community cooperation in the context of education newcomers
9	Trauma and Resilience	5. The student knows how to create a safe educational environment for displaced young people (newcomers)

Table 3.5: *Newcomers Education minor outline.*

The students obtained their credits through:

- 1) A presentation on the theory of one of the three main minor subjects
- 2) Designing six lessons of Dutch as a second language and six lessons of social-emotional learning (SEL)
- 3) Keeping a logbook with the description of 10 meetings with parents of the students at the newcomers' school where they worked or did an internship
- 4) A design study into one of the three main minor subjects

The evaluation of one of the students who graduated in June 2020 showed that this minor Newcomers Education module was also highly appreciated by experienced teachers.

She wrote: "I learnt a lot about SEL. When preparing the lessons, I discovered that it is important that you realise that they are handles [guides]. You can use the method as a handle, but to really put down a good lesson, it is important that the lessons are well thought out and that a lot of concrete material has to be used. These materials can also be used in other activities throughout the week. What I have learnt the most is about the vulnerability of newcomers.

"When I read and listened to the information about the trauma and the result of this trauma, I was deeply touched. The realisation that these students need a safe living environment above all other things has been well received. Teachers are not neuropsychologists (unfortunately), but the realization that we can already give the students a lot of healing by working on social development at a basic level has led to a different view of my teaching approach.

"In consultation with my colleague, we agreed together to adjust our education/teaching accordingly. If some students cannot cope (due to tension, fatigue, over-questioning, etc), we do not exert pressure, but we give them the space to come to themselves by talking together or offering them an activity in which they relax (drawing, playing with the Lego, playing in the kitchen, etc). We see that the quiet students are more relaxed now and they dare to say more."

In December 2018, the Inholland University of Applied Sciences agreed to implement the module on Newcomers Education developed through the SIREE project.

Ultimately, 10 students chose to follow this minor in the 2020 spring semester, and two students completed it in June 2020. Eight students also completed the Newcomer minor in August 2020, after receiving permission to do so from the University of Applied Sciences during the Covid-19 crisis.

The minor was provided by Ria Goedhart, on behalf of the University College Roosevelt (UCR) and Hanneke Pot, on behalf of Inholland. Ria offered the lessons, assignments and research on social-emotional learning and parental involvement, while Hanneke provided the lessons, assignments and research on language development and multilingualism.

CASE STUDY:

IMPRESSIONS OF THE EXPERIENCES OF STUDENTS IN PRACTICE

Newcomers Education InHolland University of Applied Sciences module

School type: University students in primary education

Country: The Netherlands

SIREE partner organisation: University College Roosevelt

The three central topics in the module Newcomers Education for teachers in primary schools are: **Language Education, Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) and Parent Involvement**. The student teachers made a live presentation showing they studied the theory of the three topics – on film or a PowerPoint presentation with recorded audio. Some examples of questions they answered during the presentations are:

- 1) Why do many teachers in newcomer education find it difficult to reach and work together with the parents?
- 2) What is social-emotional learning and why is it important for all students?
- 3) What information is important to estimate the initial situation of the language development of students, so that the education is tailored as much as possible to their support needs?
- 4) What knowledge does a teacher need to be able to react in a culturally sensitive way to customs and traditions and the language at home?
- 5) How does trauma affect brain development and what does this mean for the education of traumatised students?

They also received a practical assignment for Language Education to do an overview of the initial situation of their pupils' language level to hold lessons, and reflect on the process and results. For instance, student teacher X divided her pupils into three language levels based on observations, an analysis of a starting test and the test results of pupils who have been at her school for some time. From this overview, the pupils were classified on levels related to:

- 1) Vocabulary Education
- 2) Text Comprehension
- 3) Conversation
- 4) Sound Education
- 5) Story Writing

Writing a story was quite a challenge for pupils with a limited Dutch vocabulary. Student teacher X used the method "The language round" (Van Norden, 2009), where telling, listening, writing, reading and language reflection are discussed in conjunction. The starting point for the language round is to enjoy the exchange of experiences. A language round consists of seven steps that allow a student to write a text and includes 1) making a circle, 2) introducing the topic, 3) storytelling, 4) drawing and/or writing the most important words, 5) conversations between two students, 6) write a text and 7) read aloud.

The method was used within the theme healthy eating, and for pupils with very limited vocabulary she skipped step five and went straight to step six. Together with the students, she wrote words and/or sentences describing the drawings they made.

After the assignment she wrote: "I have learnt a lot from reading the literature and applying the knowledge in preparing the lessons. This helps me to see the connections between the different language areas and I get a better insight into the structure of the learning pathways. I find myself learning new things every day that helps me to improve the education of newcomers. Together with my colleagues I discuss what I have read in the literature and we have decided to make some improvements in language education. My colleagues and the students are very enthusiastic about working with some new teaching methods, such as 'The language round'. The students are very proud of themselves when they have written a story. These are great developments. The importance of multilingualism is mentioned in the lessons and literature and I have mentioned it in my presentation about Culturally Sensitive Teaching. I have not yet been able to use it in practice. This is something that will be on the agenda of the language class after the summer."

Student teacher Y also assessed the initial situation of her students in her internship class, where vocabulary education was given to all pupils together and not in small groups. It was intended students would help each other, and during a lesson she worked on the theme of seasons, and used both semantizing (expanding, explaining, portraying, pronouncing) and consolidating (practicing and repeating). She asked questions about the weather outside, and showed the pupils a hat and sunglasses to convey the seasons. The students learnt by repeating the words, mentioning the words in their own language and adding to sentences.



In her reflection on the lesson she wrote: "Many students in my class come from Eritrea. They enjoy [talking] about their country and translating the Dutch words into Tigrinya during the vocabulary lessons. That's how I learnt words in Tigrinya. I also have students from the Ukraine, they [talked] less about their country and did not like to use their own language. The students discovered that Somali and Tigrinya are very similar. Or that the same words mean something completely different. A boy from the Philippines did not know many words in his native language and this made him insecure. The students were allowed to know for themselves whether they wanted to translate the words into their own language or not."

For the Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) topic, the student teachers of the module were asked to map out the initial situation of their students to develop lessons at group level and lessons for individual pupils who need extra support.

In order to map out the initial situation, student teacher X made an overview of:

- 1) Characteristics of the immediate environment (family situation, reason why the pupil is in the Netherlands, parental involvement)
- 2) Personal characteristics (self-image, self-control, impressions child has experienced)
- 3) Cognitive characteristics (fields in which the pupil excels or experiences problems)
- 4) Social characteristics (image of others, entering into relationships and making choices)
- 5) Characteristics of the school (SEL offering, trauma-sensitive education, cooperation with other aid organisations)

The support needs of her group included topics such as relationships, self-control, and self-image. She designed three group lessons on the self-image of pupils with titles *Where have I lived/where do I come from?*, *Emotions*, and *Who am I?* – the students used the theme of World Travellers for these lessons.

Student teacher X had planned her SEL classes during the home school period caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. She called her pupils and parents to find out how they were doing in the field of learning, but also about the emotions the pupils and parents experienced. She gave them emotion cards in their own language, along with assignments for home and reflected: *“Unfortunately I could not give lessons on social-emotional learning at school because of the crisis and the pupils working at home. That’s why we sent the parents at home lessons on social-emotional learning. We used emotion cards with six universal feelings. The pupils can cut out the cards and hang them in the living room. Or create their own cards by drawing other emotions. Before the children start eating, they may be asked how they feel and why. During the meal, the children can discuss this with their brothers or sisters and parents. Memory can also be played with these cards. The explanation is included with the cards in 10 different languages.”*

For the subject of Parental Involvement, the student teachers described 10 meetings with parents in a log, on the basis of a number of points of attention and also reflected on these meetings. The description of the meetings showed student teachers were able to:

- Ask questions related to the support needs of the pupil and the parents
- Have knowledge of the countries of origin
- Respond in a culturally sensitive manner
- Involve the parent in the education
- Understand the specific challenges that parents face

Student teacher X wrote: *“I have a conversation with mother B. She speaks Romanian and doesn’t speak Dutch. Mother is waiting for me at the door at the beginning of the day. She wants to tell me something. Her son has to translate it. Mother is worried about her son. During the break he is beaten by other pupils.*

“At home he tells her that he doesn’t like school and is sad. I don’t think it’s a good idea that her son is acting as an interpreter in this situation. I quickly consult with my mentor and ask her if I can make an appointment with mother B and an interpreter. My mentor thinks that is a good idea. Mother B understands this and agrees. She indicates that her sister-in-law can help her to translate. We make an appointment. I prepare the meeting with my mentor. I’m going to have this conversation alone. I discuss with mother how her son is developing in class and what we, as a school, can do to help him.”

Student teacher Y wrote: *"I have a conversation with father C and mother M. They have three children at our School for Newcomers Education. Two of them are going to another class. Mother doesn't speak the Dutch language well, father a little better. He has been in the Netherlands for some time. The parents are very friendly and are very curious about how their children are doing at school. The parents are very interested in what I am going to [say]. Two of three children are ready to go to mainstream education. I find it difficult to explain to parents why one of their children has to stay with us until the end of the school year. My colleague was there and thought that I explained it very calmly and step by step. I had all the information about the children with me during the conversation. I want to be able to answer all their questions."*

Student teacher Z wrote: *"I have a conversation with mother A and mother Y. Mother A speaks Arabic, she doesn't speak Dutch. Mother Y speaks Arabic and a little Dutch. Mother A is hit by a car. The ambulance is on the spot. Mother Y comes to inform me. We walk to the ambulance together. Mother Y helps with the communication. Mother A's son is also on the spot and very shocked. I ask mother Y to explain the situation and to comfort mother A's son.*

"Then we agree that I take the son to class and that mother Y stays with mother A. In class we talk about the accident and we serve the pupils tea with extra sugar as the pupils often get at home. The son is picked up after half an hour. Everything turns out to be in order with mother A. My colleague says it is good to know which parents/colleagues speak which languages. When there is an incident, you can call in the right parent/colleague to establish contact with the other parent(s). In the pupil tracking system I look at the languages that the parents speak so that I know who I can ask for help if necessary."

The implementation of the module met with a set of challenges, as students who started in February 2020 were largely affected by Covid-19. Since March 2020, the module was provided online, as well as the education at the primary schools where students did their internships. As a result, practical assignments students had prepared turned out differently. In some situations, they were only able to prepare lessons for Language Education and SEL.

They were not able to teach the lessons in practice, and their supervisors gave feedback on the lesson plans. In other situations, student teachers were able to conduct their designed lessons online. It was encouraging to read how they were searching for possibilities to reach their pupils and the parents. Some student teachers did not have contact with parents at all, due to parents with insufficient digital skills and occasionally the municipality had to provide devices first. On the bright side, some students had much more contact with their parents compared to before, and the parents attended online lessons and learnt together with their children. They also had contact with the parents by Facebook Messenger or WhatsApp, and met each other every week to hand out homework packages.

Course for teachers working with newcomers at school

The module content has been successfully incorporated into a post-bachelor course for teachers in primary, secondary and vocational education through the Seminarium voor Orthopedagogiek at The Hogeschool Utrecht, offered currently in the cities of Vlaardingen and Schiedam in the Netherlands.

The course is offered to school teams and partnerships. Just like the minor in Newcomers Education for future teachers at Inholland University of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands, this course also used the same set of learning outcomes described earlier in this chapter. The course consisted of monthly meetings to give teachers time to further study and develop new approaches in practice. **Table 3.6** sets out the content of each meeting.

Table 3.6: *Content of monthly meetings.*

1	Language The policy of Dutch language teaching to non-native Dutch speakers. The vision on language is the main subject. The following topics are discussed: the vision on multilingualism, the balance between structured language provision (NT2) and a wide range of languages, its significance for school practice, a broad intake and how to deal with the literacy of semi-skilled and unskilled pupils. The need for language policy is also discussed	2	Social-Emotional Learning What is the meaning of Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)? How do you deal with a diversity of ethnic and linguistic backgrounds? Which learning goals and which curriculum suit your own school? What is the role of the teacher and which teaching materials can be used in the SEL lessons for students (and parents) with a refugee and/or migration background?
3	Trauma and Resilience What influence do traumatic experiences have on the development of students? How can the teacher deal with these and what can the school do to increase resilience? How can the teacher and the school provide support to students dealing with the consequences of traumatic experiences? When should the school call in external help? How can they work together to fine-tune and strengthen support for trauma students?	4	Cultural Sensitivity and Parental Involvement Vision and experiences of working in a highly diverse learning environment. The participants learn how teachers and school leaders can deal with differences in a culturally sensitive way. Finally, we focus on the question of how parents with a migration and/or refugee background can be reached and involved in the development of their children at school

In Autumn 2020, the course was offered to two groups of teachers from the partnership of Nieuwkomersschool de Globe Vlaardingen, Wereldschool Schiedam and Taalschool De Diamant in Maassluis in the Netherlands. They followed this course to expand their knowledge and skills in newcomer education.

At the beginning of the course, the students filled in the pre-test questionnaire (see 3.3.3 Synthesis: Methodology of the evaluation of effectiveness of the module chapter). This determined the initial situation of the students and the contents were adjusted to this zero measurement. At the end of the course, the questionnaire was completed again. Based on the evaluation, the effects of the course in relation to the learning objectives were determined and improvements were implemented for future versions.

3.3.2 Methodology of teaching – course structure and content Belgium

In Belgium, the restructuring of the curriculum at Hogeschool VIVES, which will come into effect by the academic year 2021–2022, formed an opportunity to give the developed learning outcomes a prominent place in the learning pathways of the teachers' education curricula. The identified learning outcomes preparing future teachers to respond to needs of immigrant children, with a special focus on young refugees, became compulsory content for all students of an educational bachelor at Hogeschool VIVES. The inclusion of the outcomes in the Bachelor Education programme for the secondary school is intended to follow at a later session.

In addition to regular education programmes, students of the Banaba care¹⁸ and remedial learning programme also received a selection of learning outcomes (started in the academic year 2019-2020). Each academic year, about 350 to 400 graduating students, will follow programmes including the set learning outcomes. At VIVES's teacher training programme, students work toward achieving set learning outcomes from the beginning, starting by focusing on awareness and fundamental information and progressing towards competence. By the end of the trajectory each graduate will have studied and rehearsed nine learning outcomes in the new curriculum. The learning objectives will be spread over the various programme phases and incorporated into existing and/or new courses. For instance, the outcomes were incorporated in the learning paths¹⁹ *Becoming a teacher, Designing, providing, and coaching and Cooperating* in the following way, as shown in **Table 3.7**. A full reading list for the module is available [online here](#) and in Appendix 3.4.

18 The Banaba “extending care and remedial teaching” (in Dutch: zorgverbreding en remediërend leren) offers all teachers and care workers in primary and secondary education the opportunity to develop into qualified care workers for their school or school community.

19 This new curriculum counts five learning paths: personal learning trajectory; a broad view of the world; a broad view of the pupil; didactic and content-related expert, working together in practice.

Table 3.7 Learning paths and SIREE Learning Outcomes.

Learning Path	Topic	SIREE Learning Outcomes
Becoming a teacher: A broad view of the world	Community involvement and own commitment	SIREE Learning Outcome #1: The student is aware of the current position of refugees and migrants in the educational system of the host country and understands the importance of education for the emancipation and social integration of refugees and migrants.
Becoming a teacher: A broad view of the pupil	Starting situation of the learner and his context	SIREE Learning Outcome #8: The student is aware of specific challenges newcomers face and is able to act upon this within the class, school and local environment (e.g. displacement, lack of insight into expectations and settings of educational system taken for granted by locals, language barrier, social networks and isolation, perceived discrimination in support, trust, challenges of host culture).
Didactic and content - related expert	Expertise	<p>SIREE Learning Outcome #2: The student has a basic expertise as a teacher of second language (of the host country) for newcomers and is able to teach in a multilingual context.</p> <p>SIREE Learning Outcome #7: Has the basic background knowledge and is able to find more in-depth knowledge of migration in the host country: common origin of migrants, political and social situation of countries of origin and internal diversity in these countries, cultural background of the main migrant groups and their internal diversity, legal framework national and international regulations (e.g. UN resolution) and restrictions for migrants.</p>
	Designing, providing and coaching – learning and developing environments	<p>SIREE Learning Outcome #3: The student can offer culturally sensitive education in culturally diverse classes.</p> <p>SIREE Learning Outcome #5: The student knows how to facilitate a safe educational environment for displaced young people (newcomers), with special attention to observing and reacting to trauma and referring to professional aid workers.</p>
	Starting situation of the learner and his context	SIREE Learning Outcome #8: The student is aware of specific challenges newcomers face and is able to act upon this within the class, school and local environment (e.g. displacement, lack of insight into expectations and settings of educational system taken for granted by locals, language barrier, social networks and isolation, perceived discrimination in support, trust, challenges of host culture).
	Developing materials and teaching aids	SIREE Learning outcome #4: The student is able to develop or adapt culturally-sensitive lesson material/ curriculum.

Learning Path	Topic	SIREE Learning Outcomes
Cooperation	Parental involvement and participation	SIREE Learning Outcome #6: Can/knows how to involve immigrant parents.
	Networking	SIREE Learning Outcome #9: Is aware of the importance of community cooperation in the context of educating newcomers (in co- creation).
	Multidisciplinary cooperation	SIREE Learning Outcome #5 , second aspect: ... and pays particular attention to recognising traumas with a consistent referral to professional counsellors.

3.3.3 Synthesis - methodology of the evaluation of effectiveness of the module

Evaluation of effectiveness of the module has two main modalities or methods: Pre-test vs. post-test measurement of participants' self-efficacy in the domain. Also, behavioural rubric testing if students demonstrated mastery of the learning objectives in their work. The pre-test vs. post-test measurement of participants' self-efficacy used two standardised questionnaires. The first one was a pre-existing validated scale called the Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale (CRTSE; Siwatu, 2007).

The CRTSE is a 40-item Likert-type scale designed to investigate how efficacious preservice teachers are in executing particular teaching practices that culturally responsive teachers have adopted. In this scale participants rate their confidence in their capabilities to operate such teaching practices.

The second questionnaire was an 18-item tool especially designed to cover the domains of learning objectives. It has been developed via the Delphi method, based on identified learning objectives which also served as a foundation of the evaluated modules.

Besides the pre-test vs. post-test measures of changes in students self-efficacy in the domain of newcomers' education, there was behavioural rubric, applied during the course by the instructors to evaluate whether the work of the students demonstrated the mastery of each of the learning objectives. The rubric contained a minimum of two items per learning objective. See Appendix 3.2.

3.4 Results

3.4.1 Results of quantitative evaluation

The results of the first five students who completed the educational minor module at the Inholland teachers' education institute in the Netherlands showed that most demonstrate sufficient or good mastery of its observable learning outcomes, adhering to the module's learning objectives. Specifically, 77% of the observable outcomes were mastered. One of the outcomes was not possible to assess, due to lack of face-to-face interaction imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak.

Table 3.8 Results of students of the first implementation of the learning module in the Netherlands in terms of achieving observable learning outcomes.

Learning Outcomes					
	Not covered in the course	Insufficient	Sufficient	Good	Not possible to establish
Total number	18	16	84	44	8
Total per cent	11%	9%	49%	26%	5%
Valid per cent	11%	10%	52%	27%	

Initially students of teacher's education in both countries had moderate self-efficacy in the area of learning objectives of the module preparing them to provide education to migrant children. Their initial confidence fluctuated between 66% and 69%.

There was a very substantial increase of self-efficacy among students who completed the module in the Netherlands in the first half of 2020.

Table 3.9 Results of student teachers professional self-efficacy measurement.

	NL 2020 I pre-test N=9		NL 2020 I post-test N=6		NL 2020 II pre-test N=34		BE 2020 I pre-test N=5		BE 2020 II pre-test N=36	
	M	S	M	S	M	S	M	S	M	S
	Scale Scores									
Self-Efficacy Scores (0-100)	68.50	11.63	74.77	10.76	66.67	16.32	68.59	15.08	65.84	14.57
CRTSE Scores (0-100)	72.63	12.14	72.51	15.04	62.98	18.37	79.70	13.22	70.98	10.35

3.5 Evaluation

Key Points - Teacher training module



Both student teachers and experienced teachers need some training to support their work with newcomers



Language barriers are a major issue which require many approaches, including training in language teaching (NT2) and different communication skills



Effective social-emotional learning requires teachers to have a basic understanding of trauma, and to be able to create a safe space in the classroom



Working with parents challenges teachers in their roles, but this can be resolved by working in partnership with them



Training modules on newcomer education for teachers can be integrated into existing teacher training, and into continuing forms of professional education for teachers

Siree in Action

Watch a video case study on the project's You Tube channel of Ria Goedhart. Ria facilitated three Learning Communities in Middelburg, then used this knowledge and experience (discussed in the video) to support the design of the Teacher Training modules and delivered the content in the Netherlands on behalf of the SIREE project.



4 Entrepreneurship

4.1 Introduction

Supporting the integration of newcomers not only helps their own economic situation and confidence, but also offers a positive contribution to a region or country's economy. Europe predicted labour market shortages in 2020. With many local and regional authorities aware of pressures on the local labour market and its role in economic development, a key strategy to pursue is to support newcomers into work to earn a living, start to pay taxes, and become a vital part of the economy and society.

Table 4.1 Labour force participation (%) and unemployment rates (%) of foreign-born men and women in Belgium, France, the Netherlands and the UK (2018).

		Labour force participation rates (%) for foreign-born men and women	Unemployment rates (%) showing rates for men, women and total		
			Men	Women	Total
	BELGIUM	65.90%	12.40%	10.50%	11.50%
	FRANCE	68.50%	13.80%	15.60%	14.60%
	THE NETHERLANDS	69.80%	6.10%	7.90%	7.00%
	UNITED KINGDOM	77.30%	3.90%	5.60%	4.70%

Source: OECD (2020), Foreign-born participation rates (indicator). doi: <http://doi.org/10.1787/fa75b43e-en> (Accessed on 24 September 2020); OECD (2020), Foreign-born unemployment (indicator). doi: <https://www.doi.org/10.1787/ba5d2ce0-en> (Accessed on 24 September 2020).

As viewed above in **Table 4.1**, participation of foreign-born people in three out of four countries in the 2 Seas region is less than 70%. There are also relatively high rates of unemployment, with women having higher rates in France, the Netherlands and the UK. Importantly, research has found refugees are often unemployed or underemployed, taking jobs that do not match the skills and qualifications they had previously been able to use in their home countries.

They often find it difficult to enter the labour market, either because their qualifications are not recognised or through lack of training. **SIREE partner research found there was an interest by local and regional agencies in the 2 Seas region for newcomer enterprise, but they lacked the specialist knowledge and experience needed to deliver training and support for newcomers interested in setting up their own businesses.**

The SIREE project focused on developing support for entrepreneurship, in contrast to the more traditional approaches organisations have taken to assist with routes for employment. The project took this particular view because self-employment can be used as a vehicle to help newcomers to take control of their own future financially, and crucially to create jobs for the community they live in and to further aid integration into society.

The SIREE project aimed to help newcomers interested in starting their own businesses with tailored support such as running practical workshops, helping to create Entrepreneurial Action Plans (EAPs), providing mentors and introducing them to business networks.

Access was also provided to a specialised website in four languages that offered entrepreneurship support to newcomers across the 2 Seas region. In turn, the project aimed to demonstrate the value of newcomers to the regions they settled in to show how they can make a social and economic contribution via entrepreneurship and job creation.

Cooperation opened the door to a transnational pool of specialist knowledge stretching beyond individual boundaries, where a newcomer entrepreneur could benefit from access to business experts to solve problems and receive advice at a cross border level that would not normally be available.

4.2 Needs assessment

The entrepreneurship programme kicked off by commissioning a needs assessment review of the many barriers faced by newcomers when establishing a business in the 2 seas region. The SIREE project discovered a growing global interest in newcomer entrepreneurship, and a noteworthy point was how academic research discussed the assumptions made about the risk-taking potential of people of this background when setting up a business.

Creating a fresh venture is daunting enough but facing the challenges that come with setting up a new life in an unknown country means different forms of support are needed. What is encouraging is there are plenty of practical solutions that can be applied to help budding entrepreneurs reach their potential in new surroundings. For instance, support programmes need to develop **gender aware strategies** so the needs of newcomer women interested in entrepreneurship are fully met.

This often means offering support for childcare and any other measures that help women to develop entrepreneurial skills. In order to increase the number of start-ups contributing to the economy, **training in enterprise is needed**. Schools can play a key role in offering enterprise education at an early age, and similarly, universities can helpfully provide enterprise training to local communities.

The needs assessment study in the 2 Seas region (Coemans and Meyvis, 2018) explored the barriers newcomers face in starting their own businesses, but also identified potential opportunities that exist for newcomers to develop entrepreneurial activities in their current country of residence – in Belgium, France, the Netherlands and the UK. The main target group of the SIREE project was refugees and first to third generation migrants.

For the purpose of the study, four target groups were identified:

- **TARGET GROUP 1:** Refugees and first to third generation migrants with a third-country national (TCN) background (non-EU and does not include Switzerland, Iceland, Norway or Liechtenstein)
 - a) Interested in starting their own business
 - b) That have already started their own business
 - c) That quit their entrepreneurial activities
- **TARGET GROUP 2:** Groups regularly in touch with refugees and migrants with a TCN background, ideally with a specific focus on entrepreneurship
 - a) Refugee organisations
 - b) Migrant support initiatives
 - c) Volunteers working on an individual basis with refugees/migrants
- **TARGET GROUP 3:** Employees of local government, policymakers or members of NGOs and other organisations directly engaged with migrants, refugees and/or entrepreneurship
- **TARGET GROUP 4:** Existing (general) network and support groups in the field of entrepreneurship

Due to the relatively small scope of the research project in terms of numbers interviewed and number of focus groups, the results cannot be seen as representative in scientific terms of the complete research population. Rather, they indicate tendencies instead of hard data.

Between September and November 2018, project partners from Belgium, France, the UK and the Netherlands, conducted interviews and focus groups with target groups about refugee and migrant entrepreneurship across their respective regions. The number of interviews and focus groups, and type of interview respondents are presented in **Table 4.2**.





		Refugees / Migrants					Total
		Interested in start (TG1a)	Already started (TG1b)	In touch with refugees/migrants (TG2)	Policymakers / NGOs (TG3)	General support groups (TG4)	
	BELGIUM	7	4	3	11	2	27
	FRANCE	1	-	6	-	-	7
	THE NETHERLANDS	3	-	1	6	-	10
	UNITED KINGDOM	2	19	3	1	1	26
Total		13	23	13	18	3	70

Table 4.2 Number of people that participated in an interview or focus group.

In respect to the different respondent target groups a semi-structured (allowing new ideas to be brought up) interview guide was developed to support the interviews and focus groups.

The guide consisted of open questions aimed at obtaining qualitative information in regard to the respondents' views about the existing entrepreneurial challenges, as well as opportunities in the region and country where they currently live.

The research findings are set out in **Table 4.3**, and indicate that potential refugee/migrant entrepreneurs face considerable challenges, but there are copious opportunities for supporting them in the process of setting up a new business.

Table 4.3 *Challenges to entrepreneurship and opportunities for support.*

Coemans, 2018, with additions

Challenges	Opportunities
Language barriers and communication can be a challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use clear language on the website to reach more people - Use clear language in workshops and seek feedback - Offer workshops with interpreters - Offer mentors to entrepreneurs with cultural or language links - Refer people to more language training if required
No access to a network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduce newcomers into existing entrepreneurial networks - Develop networking events and networks - There should be a network of local organisations within the country, to learn from each other and to further develop their offer to newcomers
No idea how to start a business and do administrative checks required by law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workshops offered on topics requested by migrants seeking to become entrepreneurs - Workshops offered about how to start a business - Tools offered on the website to show how to complete the tax and admin for starting a business
Lack of guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mentorship as a more personal supporting tool - Entrepreneurs become buddies of entrepreneurs who want to start businesses
Financial support is difficult to find	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Include information and advice on the website about how to access financial support - Connect those launching a business to entrepreneurship organisations who offer support and guidance
Racism/stereotypes of newcomers block their business potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create awareness campaigns that show newcomers who have successfully started their business and include them on local/ social media
Fewer women join programs and entrepreneurship training. Less opportunities to start a female-led business venture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ask female entrepreneurs if they have a gender preference for a mentor - Offer childcare at workshops - Offer workshops for women only - Focus on sectors that women say they would like to work in
Some newcomers are not allowed to work due to their legal status or are too occupied bringing structure to day-to-day life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Run workshops on how to grow a business slowly alongside your existing job - Teach the skills and introduce existing support networks that people can find again in the future

Key Points - Needs assessment for entrepreneurship



Third-country nationals (TCNs) have lower levels of participation in the workforce and experience higher levels of unemployment



Problems of training and recognition of qualifications



Position of women who face barriers when setting up businesses



Different forms of support needed, e.g. mentoring, networks, specific training as tailored as possible to individual needs.

The development of the SIREE entrepreneurship programme was informed by the results of the literature review and needs assessment review, but vitally along with the expertise of different partners who all contributed crucial information from past experiences. A great example is the University of Greenwich enterprise centre, the Generator, which has a strong track record of supporting the development of entrepreneurial skills for students while at university and after they have graduated. The Generator supports graduates from a migrant background through a visa sponsorship programme to endorse innovative, viable and scalable businesses. The University of Greenwich and Medway Plus work together, as the latter has an existing relationship with local communities.

The City of Mechelen is an inclusive destination in Belgium, and supports local businesses through its economy and entrepreneurship department. It has experience in many European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) projects for entrepreneurship and inclusion. Similarly, the municipality of Middelburg in the Netherlands works very closely with entrepreneurs to support licencing and access locations to start a business, as well as supporting through crisis periods such as the coronavirus pandemic.

ARhus is a library in Roeselare, in Belgium, that focuses on knowledge sharing, creation, and innovation. It is a hub for the local community and a place to access knowledge and learning to further business ideas. House of Learning in Belgium is an educational institution providing individual career guidance for disadvantaged groups, which also includes entrepreneurship. ADICE in Roubaix, in France, promotes equal opportunities to all through mobility, and other training including entrepreneurship and employment.

This wealth of practical knowledge, experience and opportunity is a useful mix that added layers of depth and understanding to the SIREE project, pushing the thought process further of how to encourage entrepreneurship ventures. The overall objective was to increase the awareness and knowledge of entrepreneurship among 500 newcomers in the 2 Seas region.

The interventions used to support newcomers in the development of new businesses included:

- Workshops (a one-off standard workshop, a series of intensive workshops and a group who did not attend a workshop, but received one-to-one support during Covid-19 lockdowns)
- Entrepreneurial Action Plans (EAPs)
- Mentoring
- Networks

In addition, a helpful website was created to provide supporting information for workshop participants with extra resources such as podcasts. These were accessed by a much wider audience than those that took part in the formal programme.

4.3 Standard workshops

One-off workshops were run separately by partners in Belgium, France and the UK.

Workshops covered different elements of setting up a business and titles included:



Workshop in Roubaix (ADICE).

- How to start a business in the UK (all day)
- Self-employment skills (half day)
- Do you dream of having your own business? (all day)
- Foreign and (future) entrepreneur: how to pitch (half day)
- The stages of business creation (half day)

The workshops were advertised in a variety of different ways including:

- Educational organisations – further education, universities
- Flyers posted in shops selling international specialist goods, frequently used by migrant communities
- Libraries contacts with local communities
- Local government informed migrants through their offices of integration and labour
- Organisations already working with and trusted by the target group – through their social media, mailing lists and in person contacts
- Organisations already working in the field of migrant entrepreneurship
- Online and printed adverts, using case studies and videos (website, LinkedIn, Facebook, newsletters, brochures)
- Presenting at various meetings and groups
- Press releases
- Social media advertisement

Interreg **2 Seas Mers Zeeën**
SIREE
 European Regional Development Fund

**DROOM JE VAN JE EIGEN ZAAK?
 ARHUS HELPT JE STARTEN!
 KOM NAAR ONZE WORKSHOP OP 12 OKTOBER**

Wanneer: 12 oktober 2020 van 13u30 tot 17u00
Waar: ARhus (plein De Munt in Roeselare)

Programma:

- Hoe onderneem ik in België?
- Waar kan ik terecht met vragen over mijn zaak?

Interesse? Schrijf je in tegen 5 oktober 2020
 Contacteer: siska.pannecoucke@arhus.be of 051 69 18 00

GRATIS

Tips van Emanuel, eigenaar van Pretzel King, voor als je je eigen zaak wil starten:

"Vertrek vanuit je passie, heb geduld, spaar genoeg geld – ik investeerde zelfs het geld van mijn trouwfeest! – en laat je begeleiden door een mentor die je helpt met de business."

For the English version, please turn over

Project partners:

www.arhus.be/siree

Figure 4.1: Advert for workshop in Roeselare (ARhus).

Advertisements trialled different methods, including sharing that workshops were “free”, showing case studies of migrant entrepreneurs and providing the flyer in other languages. Some partners collaborated with trusted groups, and used their logos on advertisements to show they were affiliated to the SIREE project. The workshops were run by external facilitators who had experience of entrepreneurship, and of teaching business knowledge and skills.



Figure 4.2: Advert for workshop in Roubaix (ADICE).



Figure 4.3: Advert for workshop in Canterbury, UK (Medway Plus and University of Greenwich).

The workshop content included:

- Welcome and introductions
- Entrepreneurship in Belgium/UK/France
- How partner organisations can support you
- Stages of a business plan
- Pitching advice and practice
- Networking advice and practice
- Budget and financing plans
- Exercises and group work

The process of co-creation, which draws different individuals or communities together to solve common problems, was used to check the needs of the participants before the workshops began. One partner surveyed potential participants about the workshop topics they were interested in.

The other workshops blended both listening, and creating content in small groups. All SIREE partners attended the workshops to get to know new participants, their needs, and questions. Following the workshop, each attendee was invited to have one-to-one coaching appointments and given the opportunity to be paired with a mentor.

All participants were surveyed at the beginning and end to assess the impact of the workshops, and to gather more specific demographic data about those involved. The results of these surveys are presented below and provide a useful profile of workshop participants, which included 42% women and 58% men.

Analysis of workshop participants

The graph in **Figure 4.4** illustrates the changes in the understanding of what it means to be an entrepreneur from participants in the workshops.

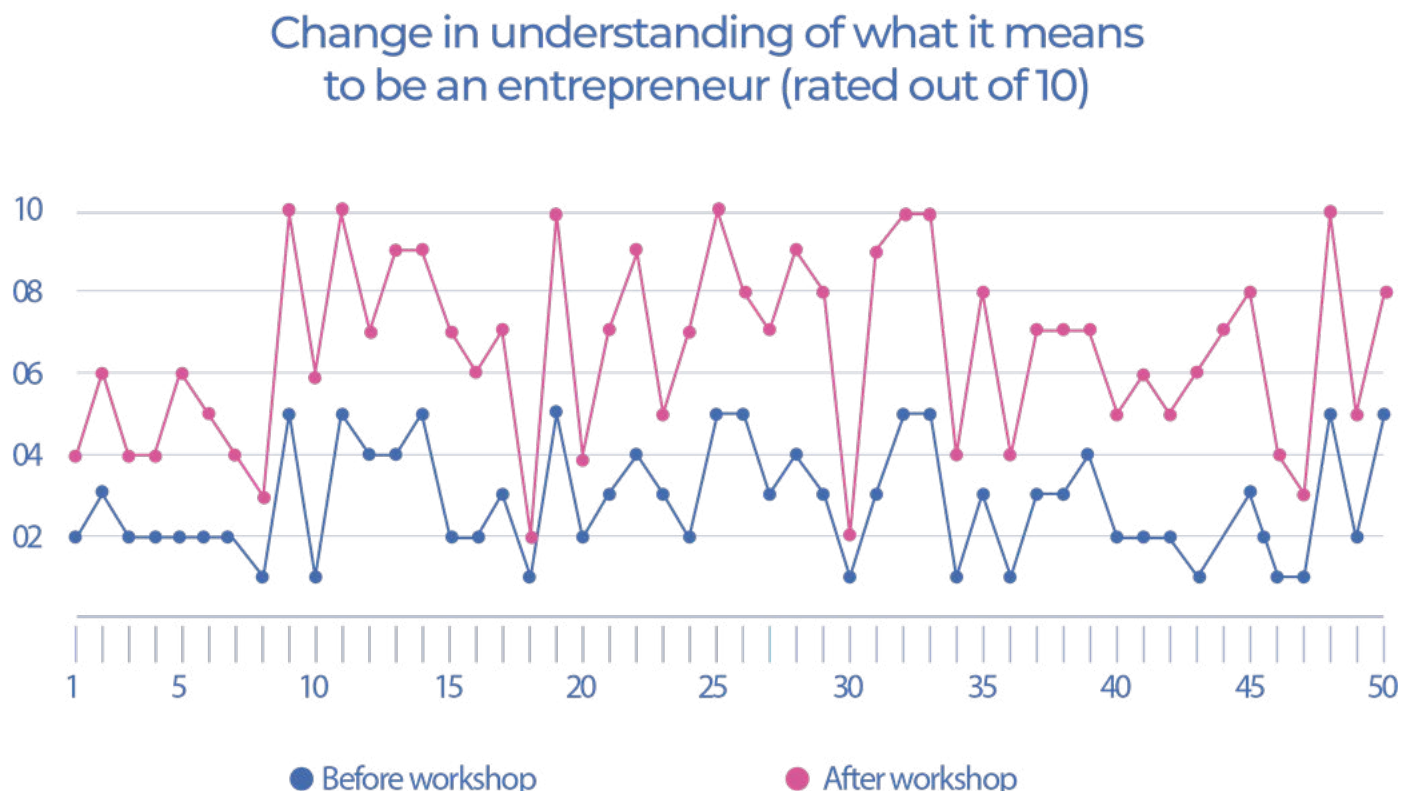


Figure 4.4: Workshop evaluation of the change in understanding of what it means to be an entrepreneur - To what extent do you feel you understand what life as an entrepreneur is?

From the 50 people that answered this question both at the beginning and end of the workshop, all had increased their understanding of what it means to be an entrepreneur. Overall, this is a positive outcome showing how workshops and personal interaction can increase the knowledge gained to forge ahead and create a business. A crucial point is the majority of participants thought they would recommend the event to a friend.

In the case study on the next page of Palestinian migrant and Belgian resident Ramzy Hassouna, we learn about the importance of workshops in helping newcomers to be inspired



Workshop in the UK in March 2020 where participants pitched their restaurant ideas.

to run with their entrepreneurial ideas through practical help. How advice on how to breathe life into a business merged with how to deal with paperwork and red tape, can give a vital confidence boost to aspiring entrepreneurs to become both self-employed and part of the labour market. An important point to remember is that linking up fledgling entrepreneurs with experts will definitely aid them to gain advice on areas they are unsure of how to tackle, such as generating a business plan.

CASE STUDY: HOUSE OF LEARNING APPROACH IN FOCUS: WORKSHOPS

Ramzy Hassouna moved from **Palestine** as a refugee to Gent, Belgium, and wanted to open a falafel food business. He did not own his own company in Palestine, and took part in a training course in Belgium with **VDAB** (public employment service in Flanders) on cooking and dealing with customers.

Through the SIREE project, Ramzy started testing his product and received feedback.

He said he was “very lucky” to be able to receive “very useful” information about starting his own business, including organisations to approach with his entrepreneurial plan and details about documents and regulation. He added: “Without the SIREE project it would have been difficult to find the right information and the right places I can go to and contact.

“I also did some workshops: for example on social media for entrepreneurs. I have checked all my competitors. I have also looked for some of my providers: I’ve checked them and I’ve found one I can work with and who can provide the right ingredients. I’ve also tested my product on people from Belgium and I’ve received very good feedback. This gives me a very good feeling about the products and the business.”

Ramzy decided to start his venture as a pop-up business. He added: “The pop-up location will give me a good experience and without a lot of risks. I’ll start from there and see what happens: hopefully within three months I’ll be able to move to a bigger place, a stable place.” Ramzy added that he felt he was on his way to starting a business in a “very professional and stable way”.

He received help from Unizo (Union of Independent Entrepreneurs) and explained: “I had some challenges with writing the business plan, especially the financial plan. But luckily I have Unizo on my side and they work with me on the financial part and I think everything will be ok. Once the financial part is ready I can go ahead and start to ask for a loan.”

Ramzy added how important it was to him to “fulfil his business dream”. He said: “I’m proud that I’ve completed my business plan by myself. I’m also proud that I’m not afraid to take the risk and that I’ve not given up on the idea of starting my business. I’m still learning a lot on the way on how to start and to eventually make it happen in real life. I think that’s very important.”



4.4 Intensive workshops

Two intensive workshops were run in both Belgium and the Netherlands. In Belgium, the city of Mechelen, in the province of Antwerp, entered into a partnership with the companies *From Syria With Love (FSWL)* and *vzw Mest* to implement an entrepreneurship programme. These partners developed the minALBI project, which was a pop-up restaurant.



Zulma serving food in the old library in Mechelen, Belgium.

Belgium, minALBI project

The pop-up restaurant minALBI was run by newcomers in 2019, who had an interest in starting their own businesses. Thanks to the pop-up concept, five starters got the chance to test their idea. They learnt the practical side of being an entrepreneur and received coaching.

This concept was reimaged in 2020 where within an old library there was a new pop-up restaurant, which provided

aspiring culinary entrepreneurs with opportunities to offer their menu on different days of the week. The minALBI project was created to support newcomers who had a desire to become an entrepreneur, without having to formally start a business. However, there were many barriers to consider.

- **Financial:** In Belgium, entrepreneurs lose the right to a living wage or unemployment benefits. The financial risk and the uncertainty that this entails resulted in not many participants wanting to continue with their business after the project. Of course, the financial aspect affects all entrepreneurs, but participants did not have any financial security to fall back on
- **Red tape/bureaucracy:** The complexity of Belgian legislation, administration, bookkeeping and taxes, made it difficult for project participants to enter this field
- **Only employment route:** Entrepreneurship is often seen as the only solution for newcomers because of the problems of accessing the labour market. The intrinsic motivation of the participants is often based on the opinion that this is the only way to earn money
- **Language and culture:** The newcomers had varying levels of Dutch language and knowledge of Belgian culture, which needed improvement before they could undertake employment or entrepreneurship. The trainers found it easier when the coaching was carried out by a person who could share a language and cultural background with the participants
- **Self-belief:** A lack of confidence of those that had been out of employment for several years and needed more support
- **A lack of time:** A minimum duration of six months is essential, both for the employer to get everything organised, and for the employees to familiarise themselves. This would result in three months of intensive coaching in the workplace, followed by a second phase of three months where employees could be given the opportunity to take more initiative and test their entrepreneurship skills

Conclusions from the minALBI project included that newcomers who took part and wanted to pursue an independent business must be properly supervised through an employment contract, because of the enormous risks involved, as well as the limited knowledge of entrepreneurial skills and the Dutch language.

Netherlands intensive workshops

In the Netherlands, the municipality of Middelburg developed a partnership with IMK, a company that advises social services in granting loans for people who want to start their own business. IMK has a wide experience of retailing, catering, hospitality and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Here aspiring entrepreneurs with migrant backgrounds were invited to a series of workshops that lasted two hours each and ran over 26 weeks. Workshops were run by external facilitators that specialised or had an abundance of experience in the field of entrepreneurship.

The workshops were advertised in a variety of different ways including:

- Councils involved with integration of refugees
- Formal invitations from councils
- Religious shops
- Language schools
- Libraries
- Places of worship including mosques
- Refugee support organisations
- The welfare payment body

Stage 0 – Intake: The participants were interviewed for 30 minutes to ascertain their entrepreneurial goals and Dutch language capability. If the facilitators felt their Dutch was at the correct level for the workshops and they had a business idea, they could proceed to the next stage.

Stage 1 – Global orientation on entrepreneurship: Workshops were offered to teach potential entrepreneurs about self-reflection and insight into their industries, including sessions on:

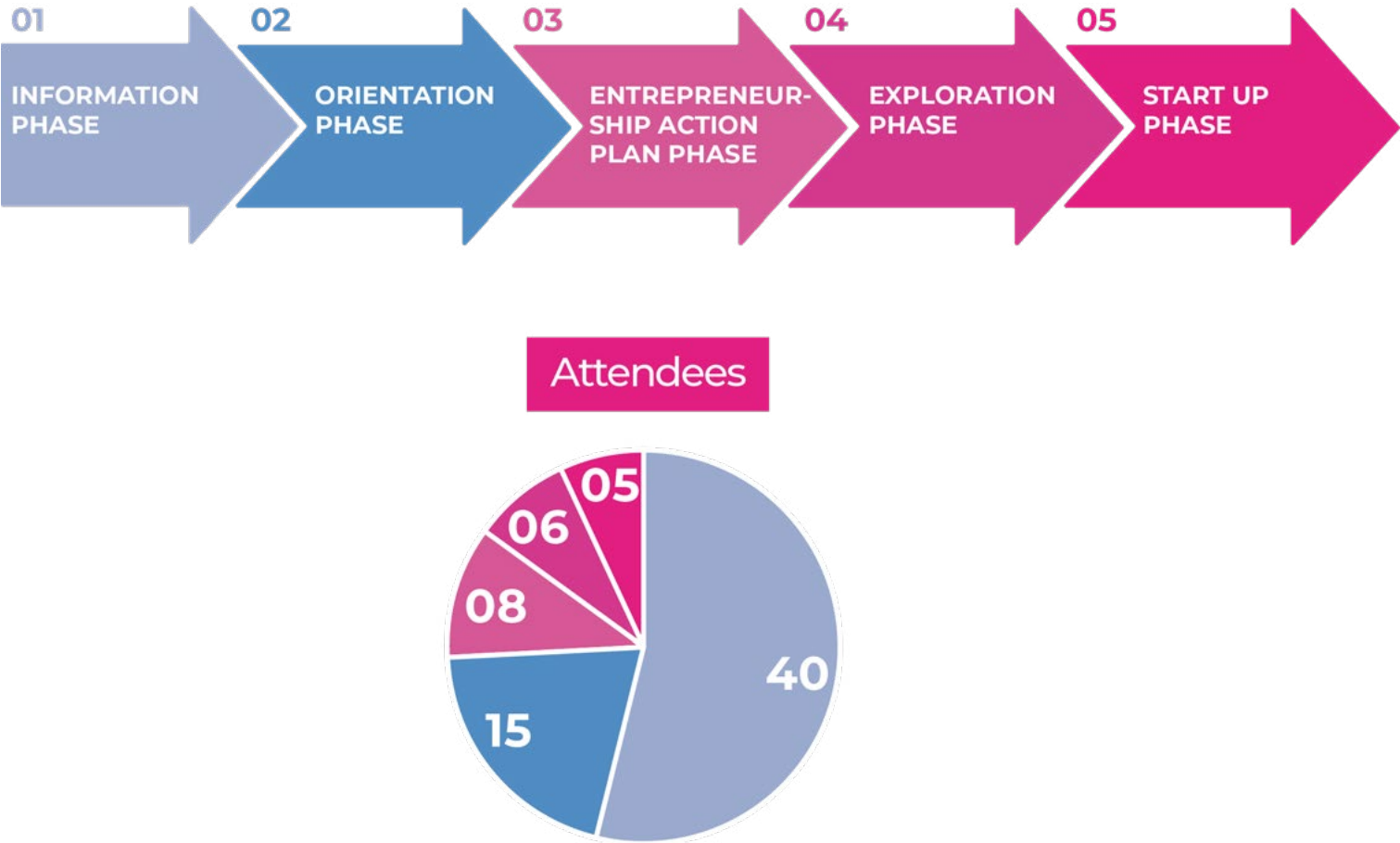
- Development of business ideas
- Entrepreneurial skills
- Finance
- Legal aspects of entrepreneurship
- Pitching
- Revenue or business models

If the attendees complete all these workshops, they can proceed to the next stage to look specifically at their business plan, its uniqueness, whether it can be achieved and what they need to do to establish the birth of their business.

Stage 2 – Entrepreneurial Action Plan (EAP): Within this phase, the participants are supported to work out their six-month Entrepreneurial Action Plan (EAP). The topics of the orientation phase will be adjusted to their plan.

Stage 3 – Delivery phase: The participant is coached and helped by submitting their plan to the social service. The intensive workshops that took place in Middelburg, the Netherlands, started with 40 attendees, but by the end of the workshop there were only five who still wanted to start their own business.

Figure 4.5: Process of Middelburg's intensive workshop structure.



There were a variety of reasons as to why the entrepreneurs had to stop the training:

- Competency of Dutch language (this was the biggest reason for dropping out)
- Found employment
- Medical/psychological reason
- Started education
- To search for business premises

Planning was crucial when running the workshops, especially around events such as Ramadan and school summer holidays. Other points of note during the workshops were that WhatsApp was found to be a particularly useful communication tool, and having a safe space in the classroom was essential. Important to the programme was the Dutch language and as a result, Middelburg will offer the next programme with a language course running alongside. The trainer also summarised the lessons via email so participants could receive translation help at home with family or Google Translate. The course was run again in Spring 2021 and because of the Covid-19 crisis, participants were given laptops to take part.



4.5 Non-workshop intake (Covid-19 response)

Occasionally, newcomers interested in starting their own businesses approached the SIREE project, but were unable to attend the scheduled workshops. New participants came forward during the Covid-19 lockdown and because it was not possible to host events and meetings in person, the existing interventions were adapted and taken online.

This was a good way of attracting new participants, but it was harder to keep track of these people and keep them interested in the project. The Covid-19 pandemic meant many newcomers taking part in the project had to either support their children at home or needed to undertake work that carried less risk than starting a business.

The new online process was:

- Attract new entrepreneurs through social media or word of mouth
- Hold an introductory meeting on the phone to ascertain the business idea, the support needed and the type of mentor that could be suitable
- Introduction to the "lean canvas" – a one-page business plan – through the website (see Chapter 4.10)
- Completion of Entrepreneurial Action Plan (EAP)
- Introduction to mentor
- Monthly check-ins with the entrepreneur

One of our more established entrepreneurs said of Covid-19: *"I had to stop with business at some point as cash flow reduced significantly. There was very little orders...Instead the remaining company's capital I decided to invest in a stock market while it is Pandemic and put employees on Furlough."* Many of the businesses are in the hospitality sector and other related services which had to stop during the many lockdowns across the 2 Seas region.

Key Points - Workshops



Tailored publicity should be disseminated through a wide range of groups



Support for development of language skills needed as good communication is important for setting up a business



Detailed knowledge of business and legal context in each country has to be provided and is essential to move forward

4.6 Entrepreneurial Action Plans (EAPs)

Workshop participants were encouraged to draw up Entrepreneurial Action Plans (EAPs), and 127 were completed between September 2019 and December 2020. These were done through partners in the UK (University of Greenwich), the Netherlands (Municipality of Middelburg), France (ADICE) and Belgium (House of Learning, ARhus, City of Mechelen).

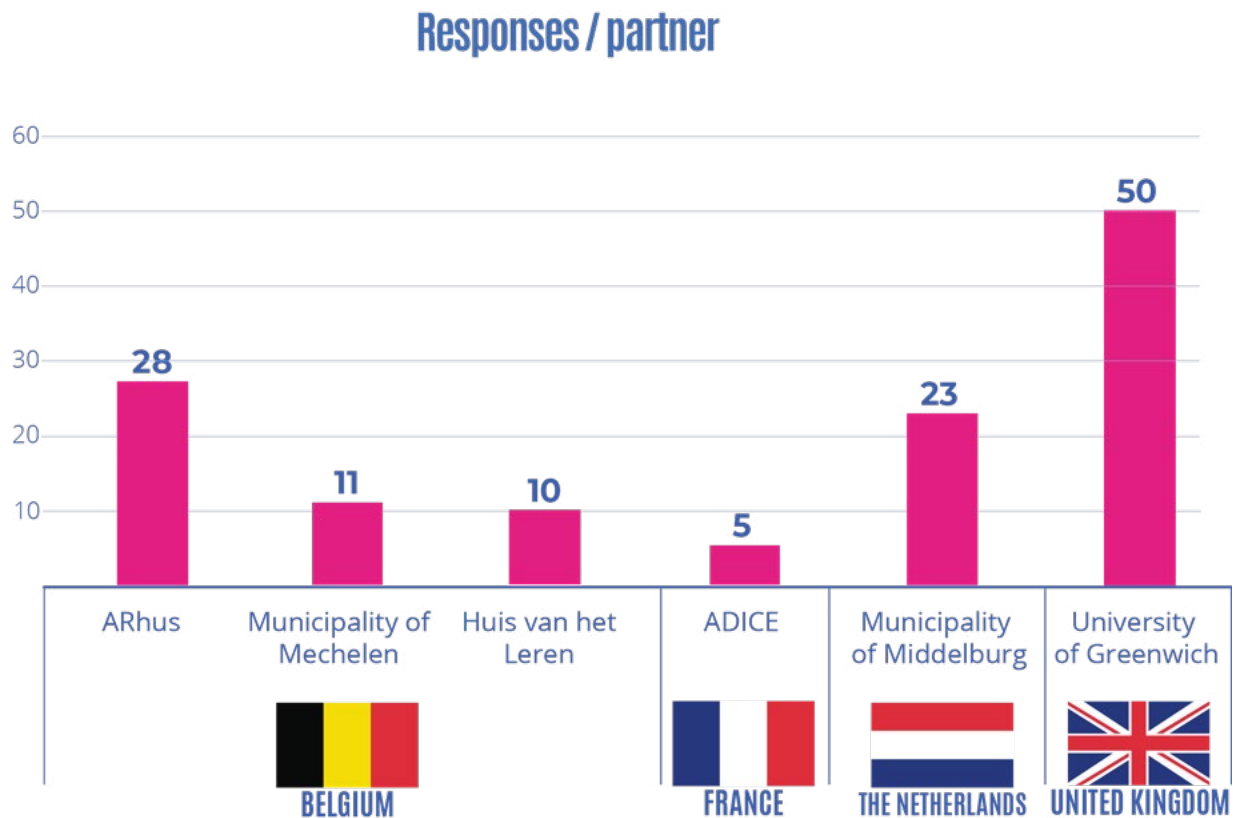


Figure 4.6: The number of EAP responses per country and partner.

Figure 4.6 indicates the UK and Belgium had the highest number of completed EAPs. The analysis of the 127 EAPs provided a detailed picture of the newcomers who participated in the SIREE project, and started to develop their own business plans. The respondents gave a variety of reasons for wanting to set up their own business.

Some of the following themes can be identified:

- **Earning money and financial independence:** In some cases, independence from their spouse was mentioned. Need to become independent was quite prominent
- **Boredom and lack of engagement:** Mentioned by some migrants who could not exercise their former profession
- **Problem solving:** Finding a solution to a specific issue
- **Wanting to contribute to the community:** Support others in employment
- **Making use of former skills**
- **Passion for a specific area of business:** Cooking or a sport they wanted to teach
- **Making use of skills they have developed in the past**
- **Reference to their family's experience/memories**
- **Lifelong experience to start a business**

A word cloud was created to address the initial motivation for setting up a business. Words such as income and independence were highlighted.

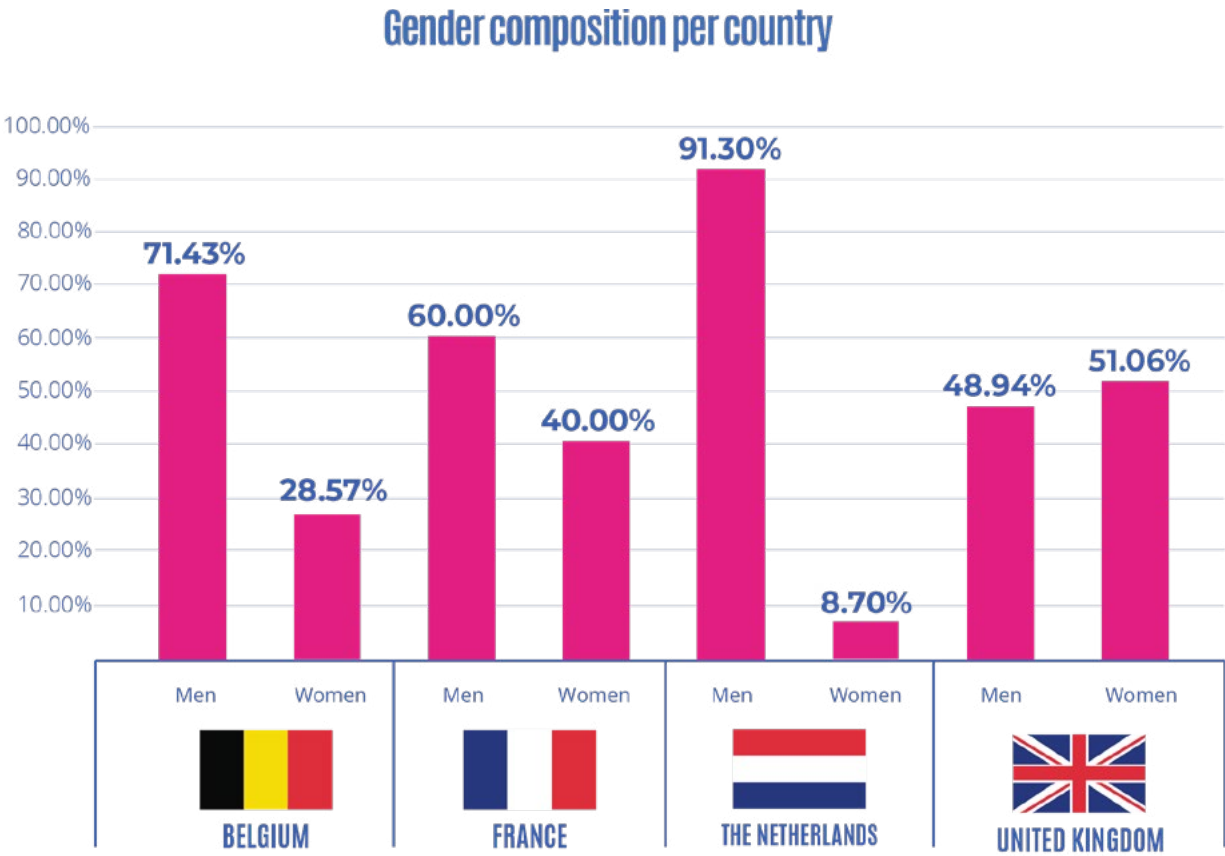
Figure 4.7: Word cloud showing motivation for setting up a business.



Although some mentioned they felt overqualified for their current work, this dissatisfaction did not seem to be mentioned as the reason for wanting to work for themselves. Recent research has shared women find it more difficult to access finance and attend training because of caring responsibilities, so entrepreneurship support has to be gender-sensitive. In France and the UK, there was close to equal gender representation in the EAPs (see [Figure 4.8](#)), but the data from Belgium and the Netherlands showed more responses from men. It is not clear whether this discrepancy is related to the different profiles of migrant populations in the areas where the SIREE partners were active, or whether specific issues – perhaps language or childcare – may have prevented women from participating in workshops or finding a mentor. Entrepreneurship support services should consider their accessibility regardless of gender. Initiatives such as having female mentors may encourage more women to engage with entrepreneurship or business skills support programmes.



Figure 4.8: Gender composition by partner country for EAPs.



The diversity of the population was reflected on the country of origin of the respondents, coming from 42 different countries. A few respondents listed the partner countries as their country of origin, which may indicate they have dual citizenship or are second generation migrants. In addition, there were a few respondents from EU countries, such as Romania.

It is not known whether the composition of the sample, see [Figure 4.9](#), related to the organisation of refugee support programmes, such as those specifically targeting the integration of Syrian refugees, or whether it was representative of the migrant population composition in the four partner countries. The diversity found in the respondents’ backgrounds suggested entrepreneurship support programmes have to be targeted at a range of newcomer backgrounds, rather than specific country backgrounds.

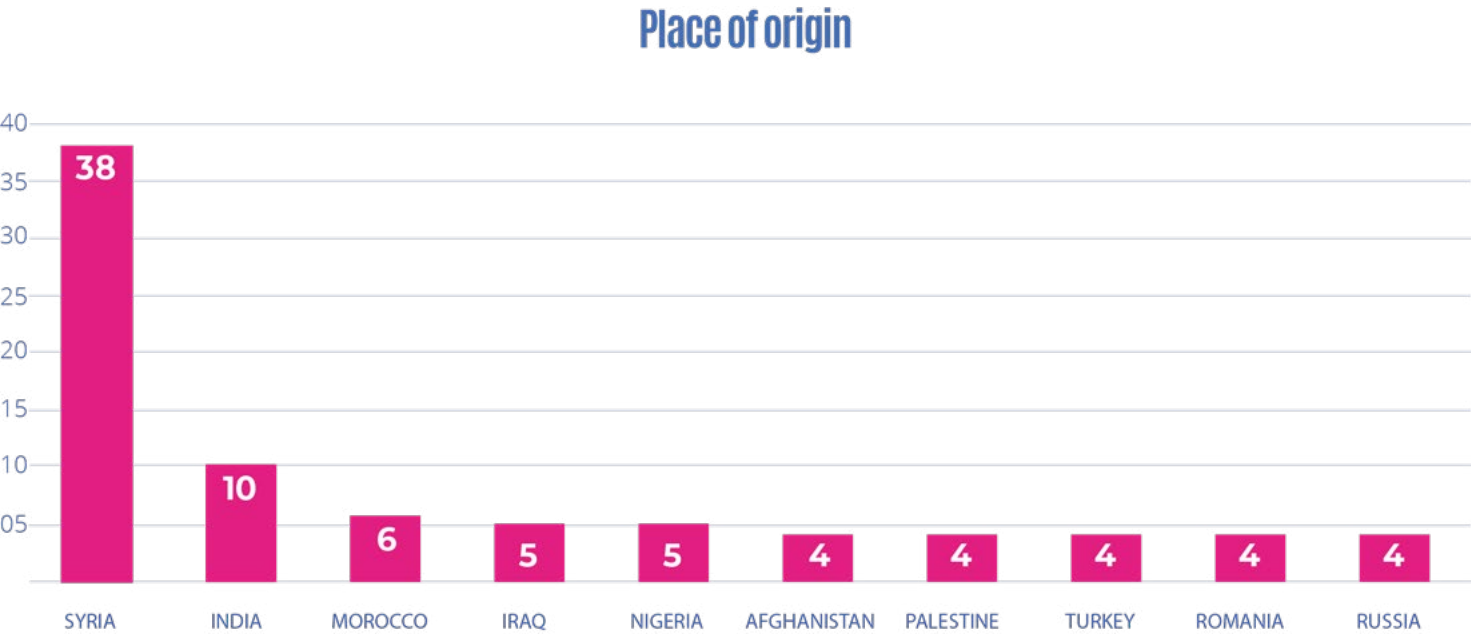


Figure 4.9: Place of origin.

We found 38 (29.92%) of the respondents had some previous experience of running their own business, usually in their country of origin (see [Figure 4.10](#)). This is a high percentage, and it may suggest people with some entrepreneurial experience are more likely to be interested in attending workshops and training about entrepreneurship.

However, the business and regulatory environment in the countries of origin would be substantially different from the environment in the country of residence. Data regarding age was measured after six months, with only 40 responses, and over 50% of participants were under the age of 35.

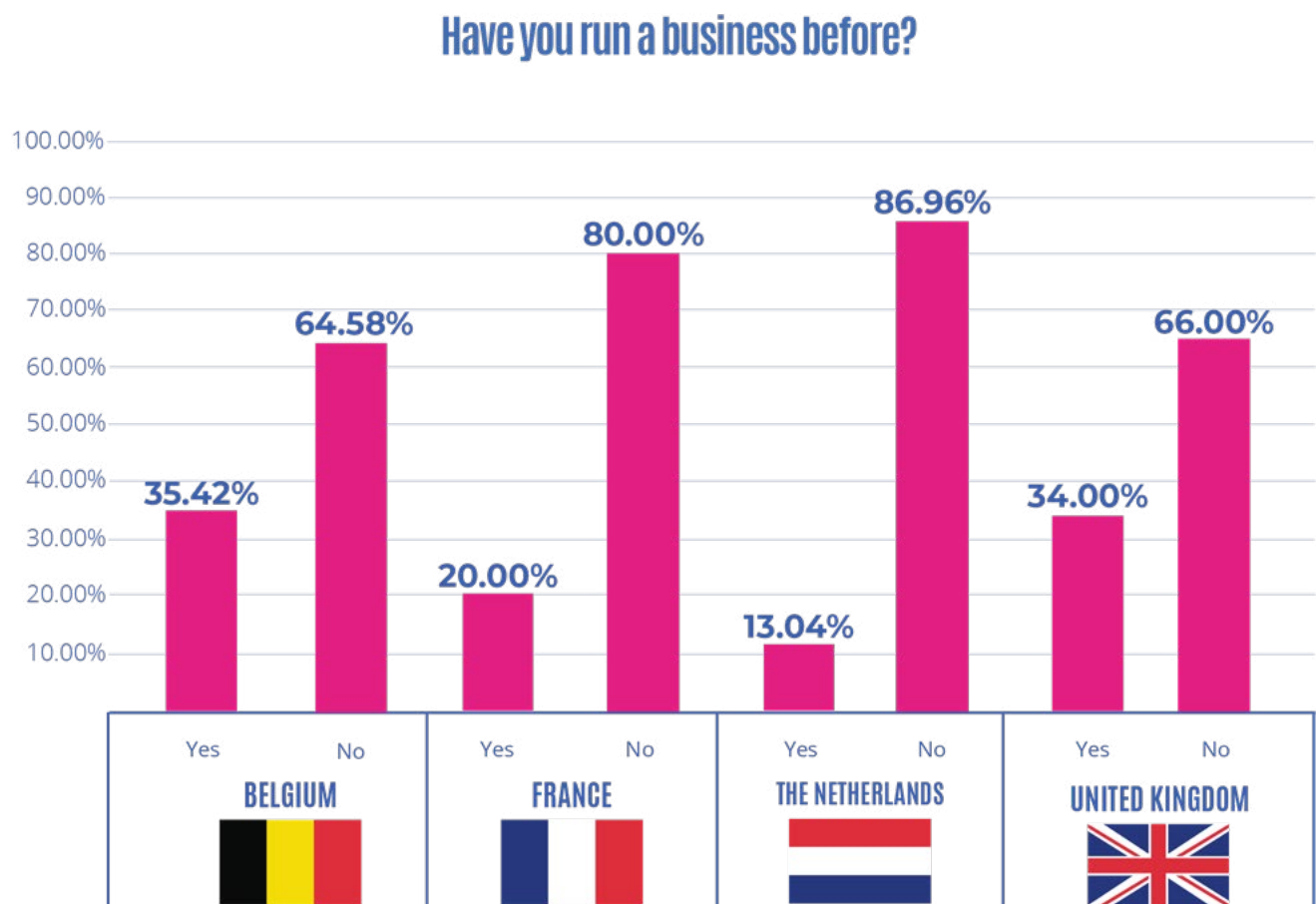


Figure 4.10: Previous experience of running a business.

We found women were less likely to have run a business in the past (see [Figure 4.11](#)). However, some stated they run a business with their spouse, indicating the role of family ventures. The businesses were in a variety of sectors with food-related enterprises (12 respondents) being popular. The popularity of food businesses is not surprising as it is viewed as a sector where it is relatively easier to set up a business although characterised by high turnover. However, this sector is more volatile as can be noted with the effects of the pandemic.



There were 10 businesses grouped as part of the creative sector (including architecture, decoration, fashion and digital content). It is evident that very few of the participants have managed to set up their own business in their current country of residence, though they have the intention of doing so or at least a business idea.

Respondents were asked about their current employment status (see **Figure 4.12**). Although an aim of the SIREE project is to encourage business creation and networks by migrants, it remains crucial to improve employability.

Training in entrepreneurial skills may help participants to improve their overall employment prospects. Having secure employment in the current country of residence, which uses their education and experience, may act as a stepping stone to enhance their networks and also become more acquainted with both formal and informal aspects of a new business environment.

The respondents in the Netherlands were less likely to be employed. This was likely related to the respondents attending an intensive course over many months, which those in regular employment could not attend.

Gender and former business experience

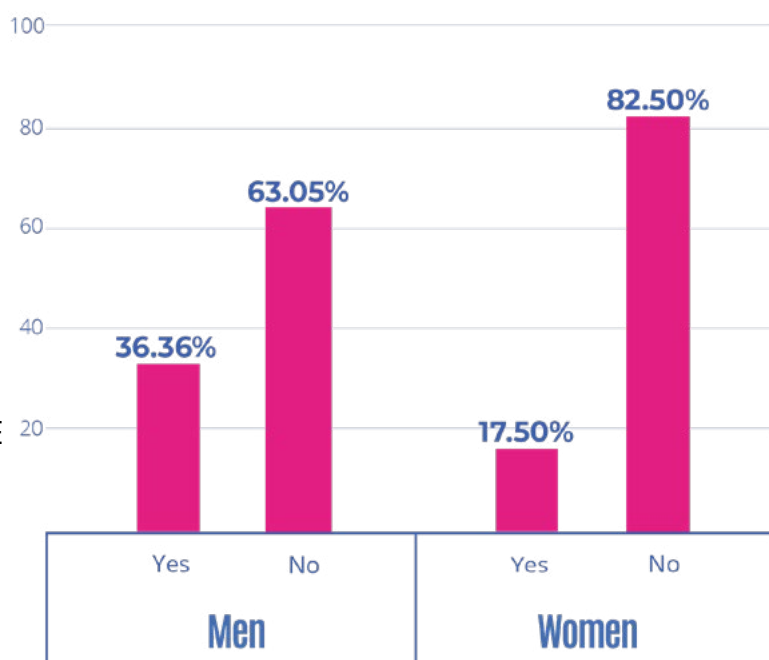


Figure 4.11: Previous experience of running a business.

Current employment status

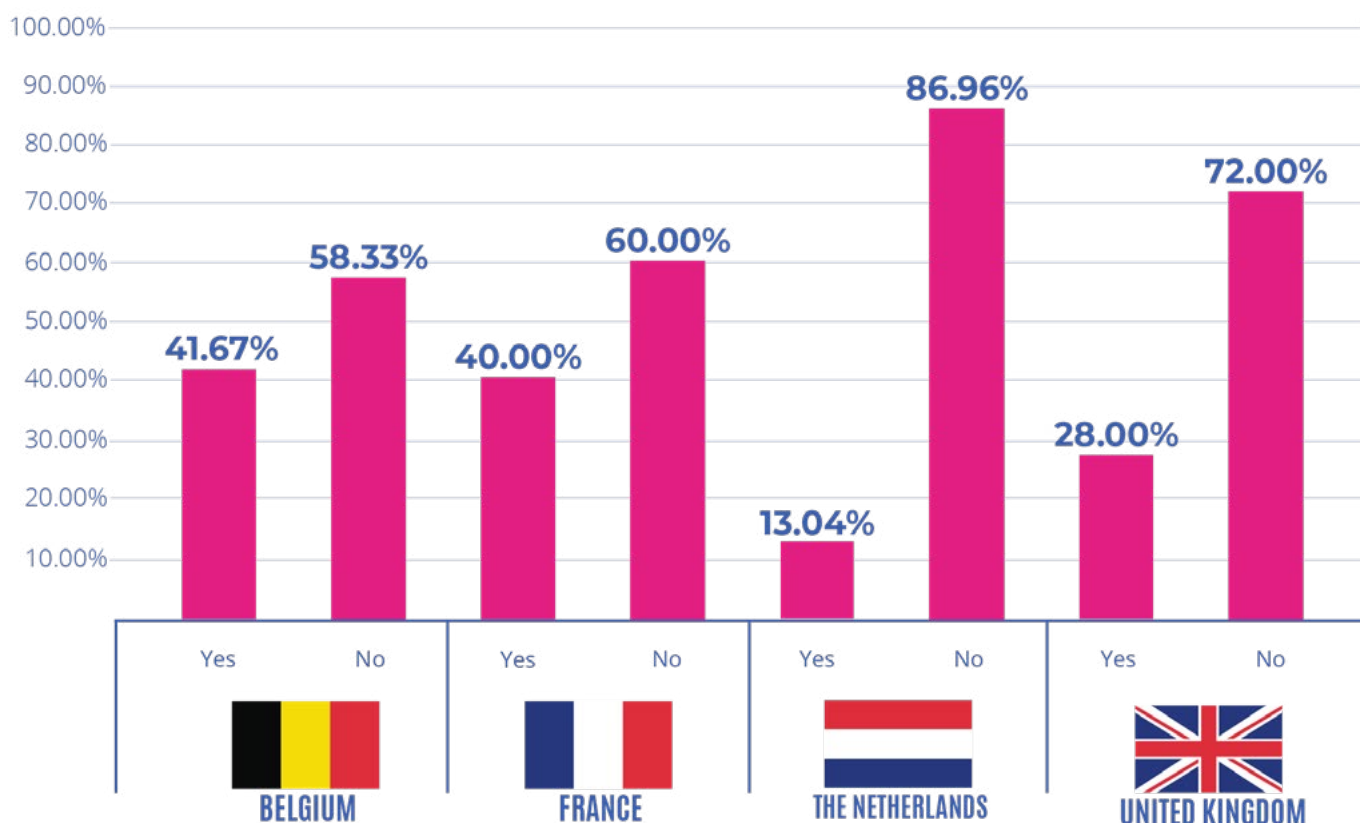


Figure 4.12: Current employment status – are you in employment?

The 10 most popular themes for the EAPs are shown in **Figure 4.13**. Food is considered a sector where it is relatively easier to start a small business, in terms of the skills and capital required. The evidence from the literature review suggested entrepreneurs with migrant backgrounds often choose the food sector, where they can take advantage of the distinctive culinary traditions of their origins in order to identify a market niche. Food is an area where traditional skills developed in the household, rather than the workplace, can be utilised: in that sense, it provides an outlet for women aspiring to be entrepreneurs who may not have had much experience in the formal workplace.

Also, food is an area where it is relatively easier to test the product or business idea with a segment of customers. Finally, people of the same national background can offer a niche market for restaurants specialising in a national cuisine. Some respondents mentioned ideas such as food trucks, which would further reduce the capital requirements as opposed to finding a restaurant space. Food-related business ideas are not limited to restaurants or catering, but also include food retail and imports/exports. Beyond food, fashion was listed as an area of activity. Again, some of the business ideas in fashion and in the creative/crafts theme related to the use of designs and techniques from the country of origin. Sixteen entrepreneurial ideas broadly related to the digital and creative sector (e.g. website design), and some business concepts relating to transport showed a degree of innovation. Overall, although food dominates the business ideas, similar trends might apply to all business rather than only migrant-run enterprises.

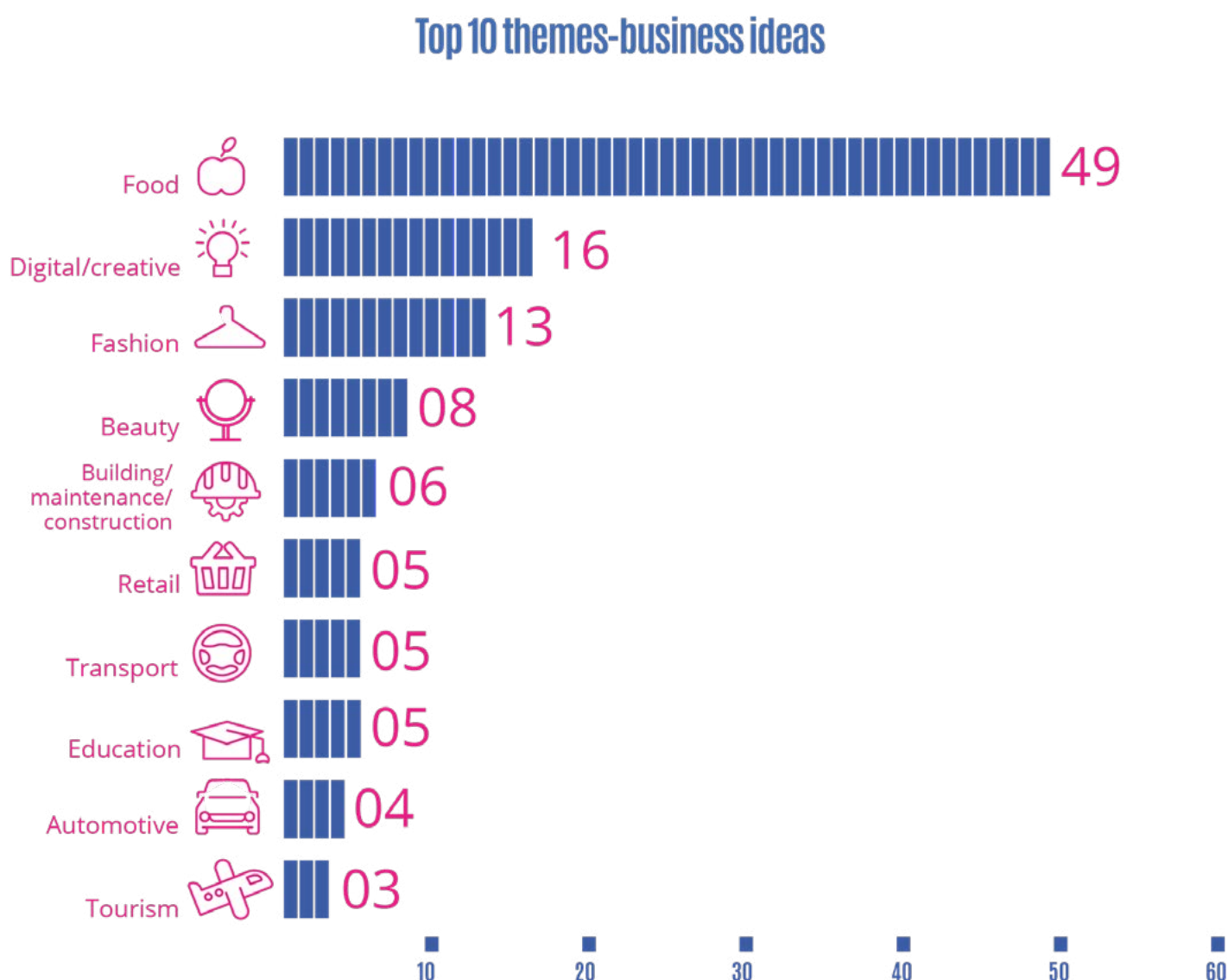


Figure 4.13: Business ideas by area of activity.

Although women reported a higher proportion of food and fashion business ideas, they were also interested in digital, tourism, transport, and business consultancy concepts.

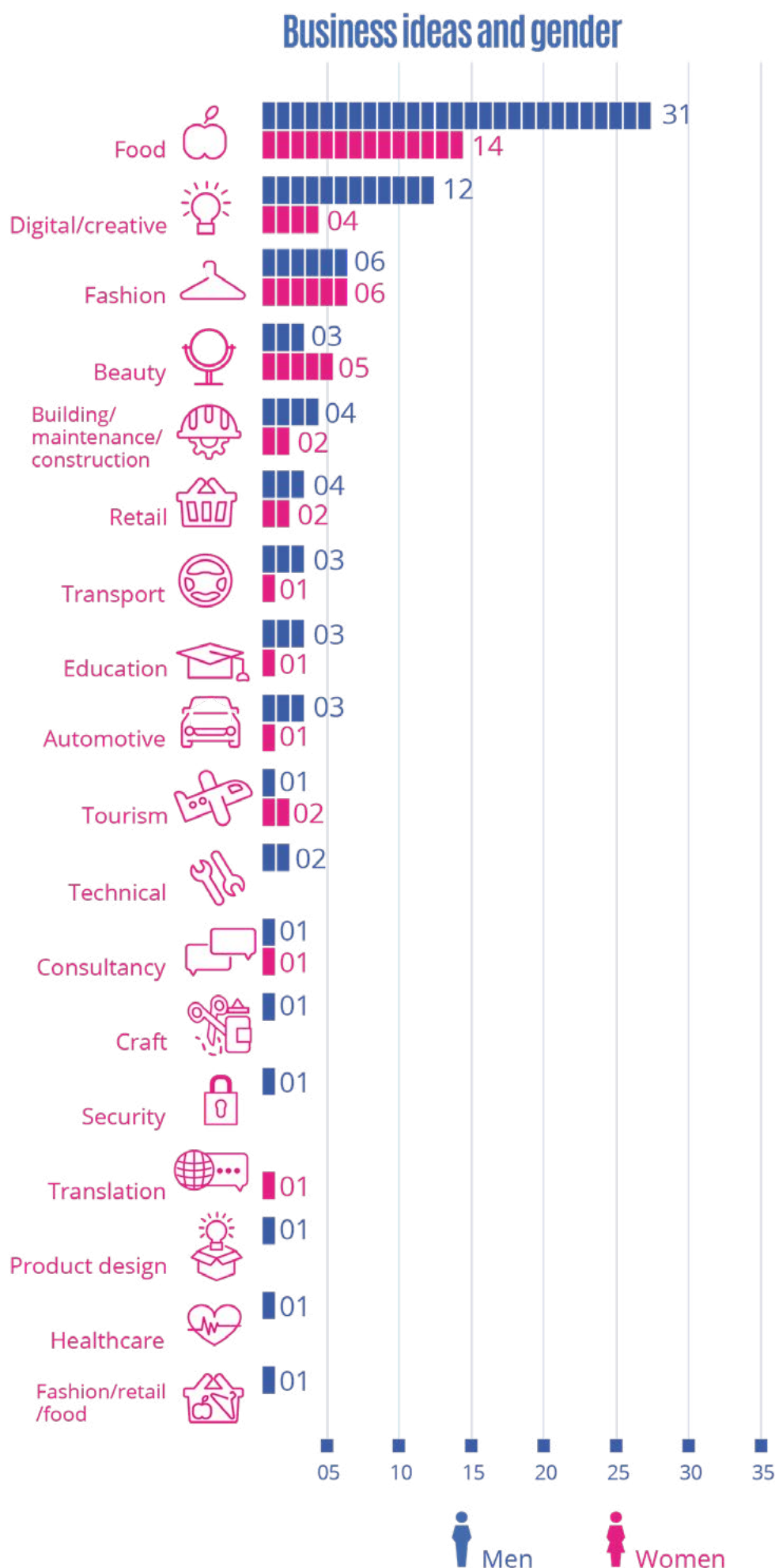


Figure 4.14: Business ideas by area of activity and gender.

It was 45.3% of people who completed an EAP that had already tested their idea with customers. This is good evidence the respondents are taking concrete steps to evaluate the feasibility of their idea and identify limitations at an early stage. Women were more likely to have tested their idea with customers (51.4% over 39.3% for men). This may be related to the nature of their businesses – product samples may be easier to test – or due to different approaches to their business planning. In the Netherlands, only a small proportion have tested their business idea. It could be that the data was collected at a relatively earlier stage than in the UK and Belgium where more than half had done some testing. Migrants should be supported to identify a suitable form of testing their product/service/business model before market launch. Even if the results of the testing suggest that their idea would not be viable, they can still gain valuable learning.

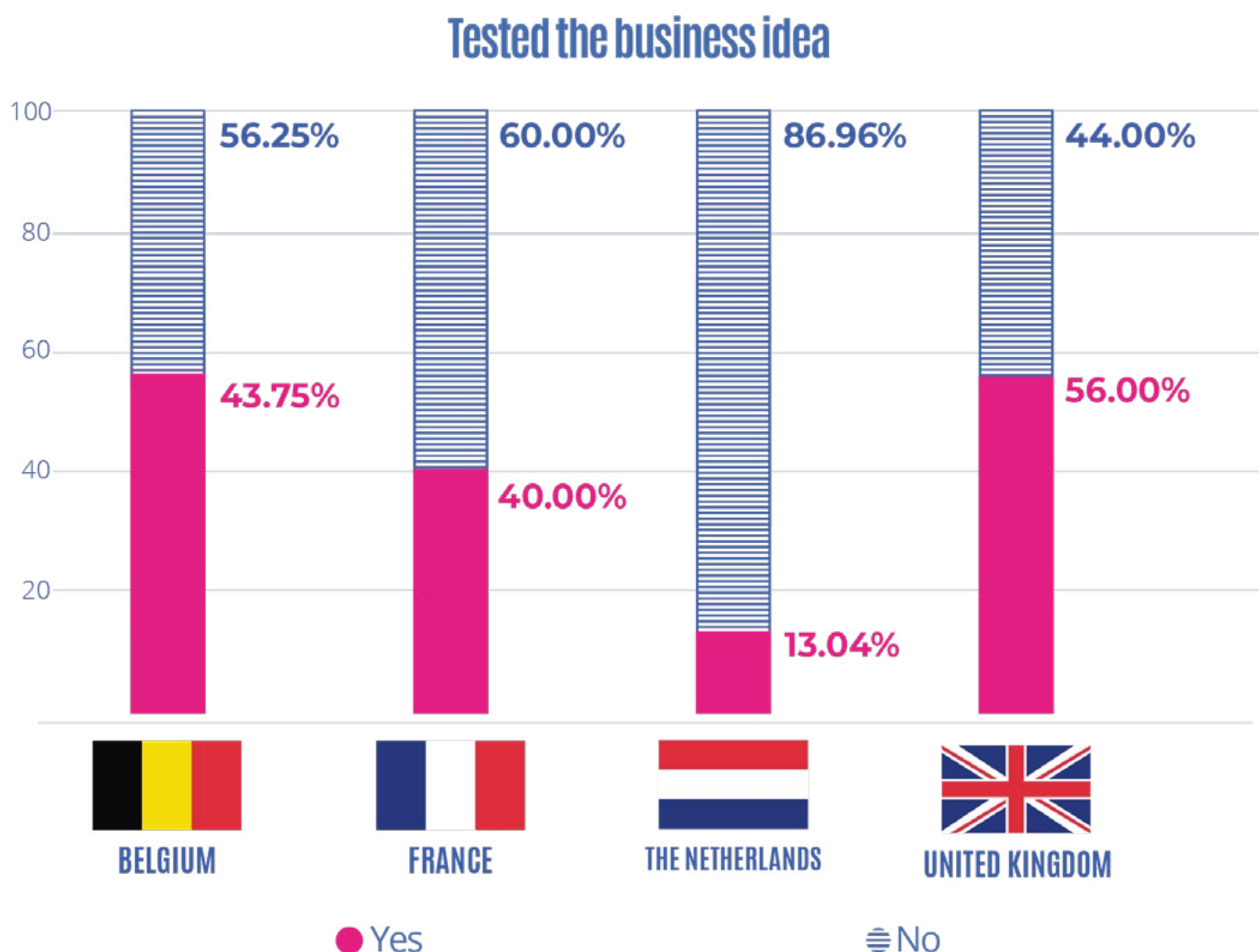


Figure 4.15: *Testing a business idea with customers - have you tested your business idea?*

Most respondents did not seem to have specific plans beyond “talking to people”. Few mentioned conducting a more structured market research survey. One source of ideas was from similar businesses that migrant acquaintances have already started. Some with plans for a B2B business have talked to potential customers. There is some evidence of making use of social networks to test the idea with customers, for example in their children’s school or in their church. Also, events and training by the SIREE partners were used as sites for ideas testing. There is evidence of competitor analysis with 54.26% stating they have an idea of who the competitors are. In cases where the business idea may be very niche, there may be limitations in identifying the competitors. Also, competition could be more direct (e.g. a falafel restaurant) or more indirect (e.g. other takeaway restaurants in their area).

The respondents were asked to evaluate their own skills in different areas relevant to entrepreneurial preparedness. The self-evaluation suggests that the respondents have a higher perception of abilities associated with their character traits, such as leadership, determination and trustworthiness. They allocated relatively lower rankings in areas regarding knowledge and adaptation to the business environment, such as access to business support, networks and knowledge of the legal framework. However, they had a good average evaluation regarding their ability to adapt to change (they ranked themselves 1-10 against the statement - I can adapt to change easily). It appears these skills have not yet translated to improved knowledge of the opportunities and challenges in their new business environment. It is noted that people may often be more likely to award a higher score in personality traits where its evaluation is more subjective. Interestingly, those who had owned a business before ranked themselves lower than the total average in skills, which focused on ability to access support in their country of residence. More effort is needed to translate the former experience of entrepreneurship to a new business environment. Those who are currently in employment generally rated their skills higher than average.

Self-evaluation

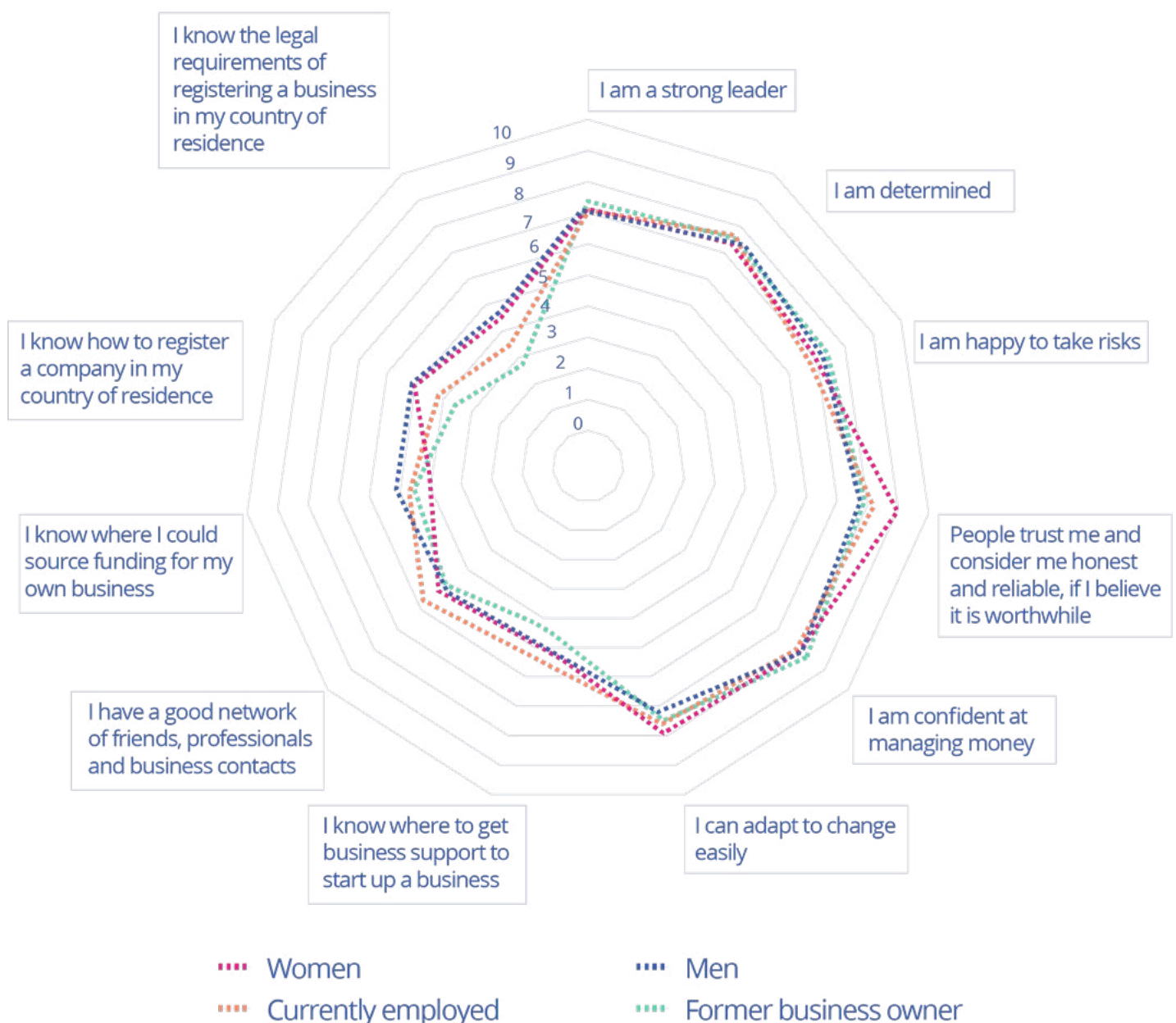


Figure 4.16: Self-evaluation.

Regarding the action points they should address to launch their business, emphasis was placed on using the mentors and the website. This will be explored further in the following sections of this ebook.

Entrepreneurs were asked what their actions would be and what they needed to do to achieve them. A variety of suggestions were made but there were a few key themes that came out across the board including the SIREE website, mentoring and business plan.



Figure 4.17: Word cloud showing how entrepreneurs plan on launching their businesses.

The EAPs provided a crucial insight into the patterns of what holds migrants back from starting a business and offered solutions that will encourage their ideas to help put them directly into the labour market. What is clear is that although we are dealing with numbers and graphs with the EAPs, we must remember that each person has a unique story and specific barriers holding them back from becoming an entrepreneur.

It is not enough to provide information and advice on how to run a business through workshops, but to also offer care and attention to the obstacles that refugees encounter. Whether the person worries about lack of experience, the desire for a female mentor, or an idea that needs nurturing, they can be boosted to jump the hurdles in front of them.

The goal is to ensure migrants realise help is there to guide them through their business plan, and signpost them through the process to achieve their ambitions.

CASE STUDY: UNIVERSITY OF GREENWICH APPROACH IN FOCUS: ENTREPRENEURSHIP IS NOT ALWAYS THE ANSWER

A woman with **refugee status** approached the project wanting to start a business as an interpreter as she was helping her local council communicate with new **Syrian families** that arrived in her area. She attended appointments with them and communicated useful information.

We created an Entrepreneurial Action Plan (EAP) and had one to one appointments with her. She still needed to get a professional qualification of an interpreter to be able to start a business. Through a relationship with a social enterprise Clear Voice that the project used for interpretation services (they employ refugees as interpreters), our business adviser asked them if they had any advice for her. It just so happened they were sponsoring refugees to undertake the course. She was offered a place on the Level 3 Community Interpreting course that started in March 2021. They have informed her that upon successful completion of the course, she will have a good chance of receiving a job at Clear Voice.

Although this did not have the impact of starting a business, this still shows how our input was able to affect someone's life. When she approached the project, her family were struggling. They have two young children; the father makes money once per week from his food market stall (that we are also supporting in trying to find a new premises). If she successfully completes the course, she will be able to help people through her interpreting and will be able to provide more monetary support for her family.

She arrived in the UK in 2016 as part of the UK's Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement Scheme and stated during an evaluation interview: *"The interpreting course, this is the biggest step I have done here, and this is the biggest step from four years ago. Just I was preparing myself to be ready for this moment and thank you so much. I am really happy, and I am looking forward to take this certificate."*



Key Points - Entrepreneurial Action Plans (EAPs)



Many people did not have previous entrepreneurial experience and were also not in employment



Food and fashion were the most popular choices of business for women, but there was also an interest in digital, tourism, transport and business consultancy ideas



Some testing of business ideas happened, but more was required

4.7 Mentoring

One of the key support offerings of the SIREE project was matching newcomers with a mentor from the area, who supported them on a one-to-one basis to help develop and launch their business ideas. In addition to sourcing mentors with entrepreneurial experience, it was also vital for the project the mentors could take on the role of coaches.

Zachary (2000) describes a mentor as being a “guide on the side” rather than a “sage on the stage”²⁰. The role of the mentee is an active partner as opposed to a passive receiver. The mentee should take ownership of their learning, with both the mentor and the mentee sharing and agreeing responsibility and accountability for achieving agreed learning goals.

The SIREE project asked the mentor and mentee to connect for a minimum of six months, and to meet or speak at least once per month for an hour. The project had planned to have a bank of mentors that could be accessed for new entrepreneurs, but it was found to be more effective to approach mentors when they were required.

Mentors were approached through:

- Existing personal and professional networks
- LinkedIn
- Individual approach of local mentors online and at networking events
- Referrals through other groups e.g. local council

The mentor was contacted to explain the SIREE project and provide background information about the ambitions of the mentee. A profile of the mentor was collated and the initial meeting was facilitated by the project partner, wherever possible the partner aimed to be present. The match is made by using more than six variables, depending on the preferences of the mentee and approach of the mentor. Some mentors preferred to work with a starter who had a clear action plan, while others enjoyed the search for a focus with their mentee.

20 Zachary, L. J. (2000). *The Mentor's Guide: Facilitating Effective Learning Relationships* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

The variables included:

- Availability
- Gender
- Industry type
- Language
- Location
- Needs of mentor, motivation of mentee

Once the partner had a match in mind, a summary and business idea of the mentee was presented to the mentor and the match was agreed before the contact details were shared. Based on a framework which defined the role and function of a mentor, the SIREE project drew up an informal contract between the mentee and mentor during the first meeting.

The informal contract:

- Defined the role of the mentor and mentee
- Explicitly set out the expectations of both parties
- Agreed on the most efficient/effective way to keep in touch with each other

Table 4.4: *Role and function of a mentor.*

A mentor will...	A mentor won't...
Listen and be impartial.	Do all the talking.
Meet/phone mentee at mutually agreed times and keep appointments.	Judge whether an idea is "good" or "bad".
Maintain confidentiality.	Offer feedback in a negative manner.
Discuss ideas with mentee.	Act as a therapist or counsellor.
Help mentee identify their own goals, objectives, and guide them on the best route to achieve these.	Identify goals for the mentee.
Inspire confidence through their own knowledge and experience.	Teach.
Motivate the mentee to pursue their business when times are tough.	Provide all the answers to problems that a mentee is experiencing.

Once the mentoring relationship was established the partner did not intervene unless they were requested to do so, and followed up occasionally on progress. Mentees were asked to contact representatives at the SIREE project if there were any problems.

Sometimes mentoring was a great success and was beneficial for both parties, as in the case study below. One mentee stated: "I think it is a really great fit and I've learned a lot from Rebecca already. I was struggling with time management and she provided some tips that really turned things around for me. Thank you again for making the connection!". However, for some people it wasn't the right fit or the mentoring experience came at the wrong time for them. Another mentee saying: "I did not continue with mentoring. It was however helpful to explore new ideas and look at things from a different perspective." As a result this mentoring did not continue and it was found that for some entrepreneurs mentoring was not suitable for them at the time.

CASE STUDY:

ARhus approach in focus: Mentor acquisition and retention

The SIREE project's Belgian partner, **ARhus**, also tried other approaches in addition to the method outlined above about sourcing mentors. ARhus used their **existing network** that included an organisation called **TRansformers** who are a select group of stakeholders and entrepreneurs from health, government, education, and culture.

The first workshops in June 2019, one for entrepreneurs and one for mentors, were used as a launchpad for the project, and a starting point to engage potential mentors. All interested entrepreneurs from the TRansformers pool and personal contacts received an invitation to attend the workshop about the project, practical mentorship and specific tools to use. In addition, an information sheet was shared that clarified the project, what they could expect from mentoring a starting entrepreneur and what we expected from them (Appendix 4.1).

ARhus also hosted a networking event with speed dates, to connect starters and mentors. One successful mentor and mentee connection was between Adelia Kodia and Reinout Van Zandycke.

Adelia, 22, from Angola, had just started her Hair by Londa wig shop. She said: "In 2013 I started watching YouTube videos of girls who made wigs and I was immediately interested. In 2017 I started making wigs myself. With my collection I want to show that wigs are not only for people with cancer or from other cultures. Anyone can wear a wig for any reason."



Sweet treat – mentors were sent a thank you éclair for their help and advice.



Business union – mentee Adelia Kodia and mentor Reinout Van Zandycke.

Reinout, manager and founder at marketing agency Exposure, had started as a student entrepreneur and was aware of the importance of advice from others. He said: "I am very jealous of the starters within SIREE. If only I had had this chance. When I started, I didn't even know what a VAT number was. I really had to figure everything out for myself."

Reinout added: "If I had had a direct line to a consultant for free, that would have saved me a lot of research work. It also gives a lot of energy to work with starters like Adelia. You can see that she converts the tips into practice. I am convinced that Adelia and others within SIREE will go a long way."

After six months of mentorship, ARhus sent each mentor an éclair as a thank you for the support and advice they provided. Shortly thereafter, they scheduled an informal six-month meeting with each mentor to evaluate the past process with their mentee and their experiences with SIREE, which will be discussed in the evaluation.

Key Points - Mentoring



The SIREE project approached potential mentors through personal and professional networks, local networking events, LinkedIn and also referrals from other groups



Mentor/mentee were matched using six variables – availability, gender, industry/sector, language, location and needs of mentor/mentee



An informal contract was drawn up between mentor and mentee

4.8 Networks

Research shows that newcomer groups find it difficult to access networks that could aid them in getting ahead in business. The importance of social capital as a single intervention was shown by Kloosterman et al (1999) to be inadequate to explain what was needed for newcomer entrepreneurs to be successful.

Putnam distinguishes between “bridging forms of social capital” between groups who do not normally meet, and “bonding forms of social capital” for those who know each other already. Newcomers often do not have the “bridging” type of social capital available.

This puts them at a disadvantage in trying to access institutional contacts and wider networks of business who might be able to contribute to the development of embeddedness in markets and regulation agencies.

As a result, the SIREE project created four different networks of entrepreneurs, mentors and other organisations to improve their networks.

The goal was to create a valuable network for all participants that resulted in a long-term support network. Through the SIREE project, entrepreneurs also had greater access to a variety of other networks, as shown through Case Study on the next page.

The networks were all created online due to the Covid-19 pandemic, they were viewed as especially important as many new entrepreneurs felt very isolated.

As a participant of the UK network said: “Motivation is hard when doors are closed.” The networks are part of the legacy of the project’s work and form a continuous support mechanism for entrepreneurs in the future.

CASE STUDY: UNIVERSITY OF GREENWICH APPROACH IN FOCUS: OPPORTUNITIES FOR NETWORKING

Bejoseholo Aikhomun, 32, from Nigeria, attended the “Start your own business in the UK” workshop in December 2019. He dreamt of starting a **sustainable logistics company** and had been supported by the SIREE project through **workshops, webinars, mentoring and coaching**.

He said: *“My business journey through them [SIREE] has been great, I have been able to attend very useful workshops that have really helped me through my journey as an entrepreneur. They have also been able to provide me with useful contacts, and have helped me during the creation of my business.”*

Bejoseholo described how the SIREE project also successfully offered him “*not just physical support but mental support*” through his journey as an entrepreneur. Through persistence and networking, Bejoseholo was able to overcome multiple challenges including a lack of capital, a fractured ankle, lack of access to connections and the Covid-19 pandemic to keep going and build the business from scratch.

At Bejoseholo’s first meeting and action plan, he did not have access to any networks but after six months, through SIREE connections and his own perseverance he has now joined an additional four different start-up incubators. He has also been connected to Greenwich Council, Greenwich Community Development Agency, the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport and through the University of Greenwich received contacts within estates, sustainability and the Connected Cities Research Group.

Bejoseholo joined the [UK Migrant and Refugee Community](#) when it started in 2021, bringing together all the participants of the UK Entrepreneurship activities. The group commenced with a focus group and [survey](#), identifying the needs of participants. Many of the participants needs had changed due to the ongoing impact of Covid-19 on their business. The community was launched with a [video from the facilitator](#).



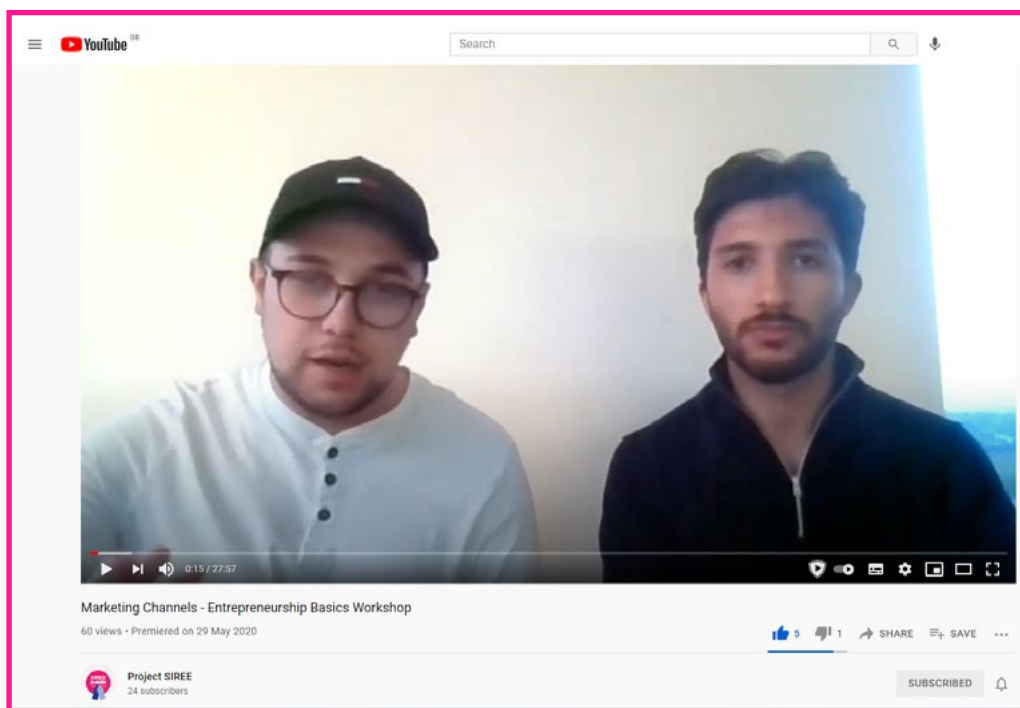
Entrepreneur Bejoseholo Aikhomun.

4.9 Webinars and Facebook Live

Following requests for more assistance on marketing from entrepreneurs, online webinars were run by the University of Greenwich in the UK, and House of Learning in Belgium in 2020. The University of Greenwich ran three webinar workshops on YouTube and Facebook Live during the pandemic period, which were premiered at a certain time and then made available afterwards. These were part of the Entrepreneurships Basics series held in May 2020 that included titles:

- [Attracting Customers](#)
- [Social Media](#)
- [Marketing Channels](#)

Following the live broadcast of the three webinars, they now appear on the [Project SIREE YouTube channel](#) which started life in August 2019. They feature along with a total of 40 videos, mostly with short clips, sharing experiences of SIREE project participants in the four partner regions in different languages, including a [How to be an Entrepreneur Abroad Website Demo](#) clip. Webinars were advertised to those who had attended workshops and completed an Entrepreneurial Action Plan (EAP). Other webinars were run on Facebook Live, advertised via partners and their own networks. In addition, they used LinkedIn, Facebook and personal targeting of potential participants. Some paid advertising was used for the first session to test the impact and success of attracting people to the webinar.



4.10 Website

The SIREE project website, officially launched in September 2019, was created to inform and educate newcomers and migrants within the partner regions about entrepreneurship. The goal of the website was to share how to generate and test a business idea, and give practical information about how to start work in a particular country. The website information was tailored to audiences in the UK, France, Belgium and the Netherlands:

<https://how-to-be-an-entrepreneur-abroad.com/>

Lean canvas is a business tool that encourages a potential entrepreneur to think about customers. The SIREE project chose to adopt lean canvas as the primary business tool, because it is practical in focus and encourages the user to think about their customers from the beginning. As one of the key aims was to promote self-employment and offer this as a viable alternative to more traditional forms of paid employment, it was crucial businesses could generate revenue quickly, meaning a focus on customer experience was vital.

Another benefit of the lean canvas model was it is primarily ideas-led, and did not require the user to write much content. Due to the language levels of the users of the website this approach was deemed important, as writing a full business plan in a foreign language might have put off some of the participants. A further benefit was that the lean canvas can be completed quickly, so users could test out and research a number of different business ideas at once to see what might work in their new communities.

The website was divided into 12 sections, as shown below in **Figure 4.19**.

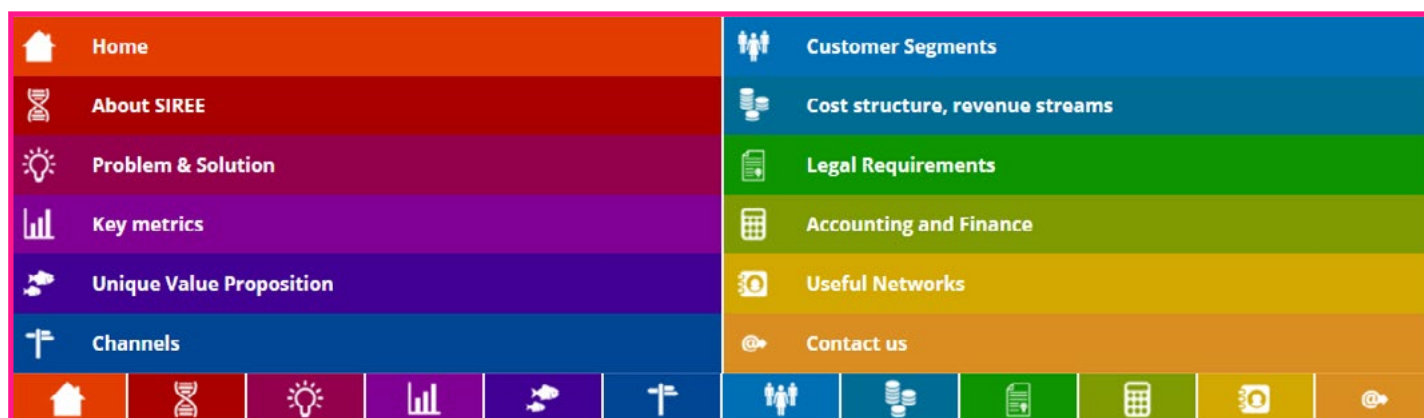


Figure 4.19: Images of website www.how-to-be-an-entrepreneur-abroad.com.

The website allowed potential entrepreneurs to download a version of the Lean Canvas²¹ which has been adapted from the original for the how-to-be-an-entrepreneur.com website. The information in the tabs was the same for each country but was translated. The Legal Requirements, Accounting and Finance, Useful Networks and Contact Us sections were written specifically for the regions that the SIREE project worked in.

Following the launch of the website, the Flemish partners re-wrote their sections of the website to better reflect the needs of their local community. It was decided to make all this content freely available for users who were not logged in because registering could have been a barrier for some people. However, all partners helped entrepreneurs they worked with to register on the website. Once registered and given a login, they could take tests through the website to assess their knowledge and skills, work with a partner to create an Entrepreneurial Action Plan (EAP) and track their progress.

Between January and June 2020 a total of 188 people visited the website out of which 172 were new users. The numbers are lower compared to the last four months of 2019, with 226 total users and 221 new users. However, the proportion of new and total users was very similar, 24% new and 76% total users in the latest analysis period, compared to 23% new and 77% total users in the previous period. This shows that although new users were being driven to the website, very few were returning.

²¹ Ash Maurya at www.LeanStack.com

Each user visiting the site spent an average of five minutes and 51 seconds. During this time, they viewed an average of 4.64 pages. This shows that less than a minute was being spent on the various pages indicating only a superficial level of engagement with the content.

The time spent on the website has decreased in comparison to the previous period, where just over 10 minutes was spent on average per user during which time they viewed an average of just over seven pages. This is also evident in the bounce rate of 50.59%, which is the percentage of users leaving the site after viewing a single page.

This can be interpreted as showing that a more intensive use of the website was related to the recent experience of attending a workshop. Over 81% of users accessed the website in English (both US and UK English) which was similar to the previous period. Dutch was the second most used language (about 8%) followed by French (7%). This is in line with the data from the previous period.

In line with the language data, the majority of users were from the UK (40%) out of which 32% were from London. Approximately 9% of the users were from Belgium, with 7% from France and 5% from the Netherlands. There were also users from other parts of the world including China (8.5%), United States (2.7%), and India (1.6%).

The number of users from Belgium, France and the Netherlands has decreased compared to the previous period. The most popular web pages are the home page and ones with general information on the SIREE project. The Entrepreneur Member Area was attracting more users in the last four months of 2019, but this has dropped significantly in the first half of 2020. Users are not spending much time on the training module pages – average times are as little as 25 seconds to just over one minute, which indicates a lack of deeper engagement with the content.

Key Points - Website



New visitors to the website have decreased since the end of 2019



Overall, visitors were spending very little time, with superficial engagement



Less than a quarter of visitors returned to the website



English is the primary language, and engagement from Belgium and the Netherlands has decreased

SIREE in Action

Watch a video from the SIREE in Action series on the project's YouTube channel called **Empanadas, tajines, and integration** showing how food became a tool for integration at restaurant Sundry Seeds, supported through project partner, the City of Mechelen.



5 Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

The SIREE project was implemented in four countries in the 2 Seas region – Belgium, France, the Netherlands, and the UK. Although there are many differences in terms of government structures and policies, the SIREE partners have drawn a similar set of conclusions from their experiences of implementation.

SCHOOLS

There is an overwhelming need in schools for **Learning Communities (LCs)** that successfully bring together parents, students, and teachers. Every parent wants their child to have a good education. LCs bring a “pedagogy, working methodology, tools, tips and tricks for professionals and students”.

Most important, LCs help to break down institutional barriers. The SIREE project found that parents, students, and teachers all have specific needs, which must be recognised in any future project.

PARENTS

Schools must remember there is much diversity within groups of refugee and migrant parents. Some of the most important issues are:

- Parents do not know the school culture
- The language barrier provides the biggest threshold
- At the outset, there is much mistrust
- A need for recognition
- A need for connectedness
- A need for full partnership within the school
- A need for active support at the school
- A need for better communication

Parents need an open and warm school culture to thrive. A school where every parent feels recognised – a school where mutual respect is essential.

Each session, whether formal or informal, starts from the needs of the various actors, and parents, teachers, and pupils need accessible activities that are challenging enough to stimulate dialogue with each other.

Often the subjects are very sensitive, so creating a safe place of trust is crucial, and is one of the most important preconditions for successful dialogue. The parents concluded that communication is key, and ideally we can only speak of an equal relationship and partnership if we enter into dialogue.

STUDENTS

Schools need to acknowledge that students, particularly secondary school pupils, have specific needs which they must attempt to address. Students need:

- To be understood
- Participation
- Proper guidance
- Recognition
- Respect
- Role models

TEACHERS

There are many needs that teachers also have, which schools must endeavour to meet. Teachers need:

- Tools (context of pupils) to communicate with parents (foreign language)
- Support
- Respect
- Appreciation
- Bridge figures
- Partnerships
- Carrying capacity
- Continuity of the project
- To understand the context of the student or parent e.g. background
- Recognition and belonging

Starting an LC is much easier if it is related to a course or training, rather than a non-binding or open-ended option. Much of the learning that came from running the LCs highlighted the importance of communication, but this does not just depend on having a common language. People can communicate without a common language.

Newcomers were able to determine for themselves which topics of conversation they considered important. However, they have to get used to being asked for their own contributions, and had a huge need for social contacts, cheerfulness, and support.

The SIREE project found teachers who were involved in newcomer education needed further training, because they sometimes found it difficult to guide students and parents effectively. The Netherlands has a minor teaching module in Newcomers Education and there are also groups in Vlissingen and Rotterdam, which guide newcomers in schools through teacher training colleges.

It is important to have a strong commitment by the school, willing to provide opportunities for collaboration between parents, students, and teachers.

This might be done through providing English lessons, family learning sessions, and also initiatives such as The Young Language Ambassadors activity – which asks a non-migrant child to look after a newcomer pupil and encourages more parents into the school.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

There was a strong demand for information about self-employment in many countries, but the lack of financial support made it difficult to become self-employed. In some countries it does not make sense financially to start a business a few days a week as you lose access to state benefits.

Partners felt they were successful in providing information about entrepreneurship applicable to many different sectors. They recognised the knowledge that newcomers gained from workshops and one-to-one sessions would not only be useful for supporting self-employment, but would enable them to explore other employment opportunities. Mentors for newcomer entrepreneurs were found to be valuable in providing regular support in terms of information and expertise.

ORGANISATIONAL CHANGES

Partners have drawn conclusions about organisational changes that were needed to implement the SIREE project successfully. Some partners found involvement with the SIREE project made them question how their own organisation communicates with newcomers, and encouraged them to improve their own diversity communication skills. For partners with specific organisational functions, for example libraries, the SIREE project enabled them to rethink and widen how to work with newcomers.

WIDER COMMENTS

One of the strongest conclusions was that the “SIREE project can be an example for society”. It has provided a powerful example of the value of cultural diversity, often showing that “we all have more in common than we think”.

5.2 Recommendations

Many of the recommendations drawn from the experience of implementing the SIREE project focused on organisational issues, and the provision of a wider range of support to students and potential entrepreneurs.

The process of developing a project proposal was important. A project should be embedded in the local context, and coordinate with existing, related organisations from the beginning. **Ideally, all relevant stakeholders should be involved in the writing of a new project proposal, so they can determine the project goals together.**

Most importantly, project goals should be informed by listening to the target group and understanding what they need. Clearly defined goals from the beginning of the project combined with a commitment and investment to cross-partnership helps partners to develop successful working relationships essential for project implementation. More flexible project structures would help to adapt to the changing needs of migrants. This is essential for achieving sustainable results which will remain after the project has ended.

In an attempt to promote integration, it would be valuable to focus on all parents and entrepreneurs, with extra attention to more vulnerable groups such as newcomers. Many schools reported that they would like to open the LCs to all parents. Some parents and entrepreneurs mentioned they would like to get to know other people from local communities because they are often in separate groups with other people with a migrant background (e.g. language lessons). An exclusive focus on specific target groups limits broader communication strategies.

Research into the effects of trauma on refugees would help to show how trauma affects not just the individual but the whole family. It affects a person's wellbeing, growth, and development and has health consequences that can last a lifetime if left untreated. Understanding the experiences of all age groups is also important.

Working with local and regional authorities to help them recognise the needs of newcomers in their policies and strategies, particularly in education and self-employment, provides an essential foundation for social and economic integration. This requires partners to establish strong, working relationships with local and regional authorities. Direct involvement of local authorities can help newcomers access resources and networks.

A greater degree of cultural diversity in the partner organisations and schools would help to design more innovative and creative solutions. Some partners thought that in-house expertise was more valuable than using external expertise. For the target group, it is clearer to use the branding of the project partner rather than create a whole new project branding. For the project partners, it pays off to build on existing communication channels and tools, as there is already a foundation and network to start from.

SCHOOLS

Schools need to provide sufficient support in terms of allowing students and teachers enough time to devote to LCs. A SIREE worker placed in a school was an effective way of providing continuous support for LC development.

As one of the LC participants poignantly wrote:

"The SIREE project is a project. The advantage here is that you can fall and get up and try things out. It gives you a chance to find out what works, what doesn't. You will also learn to deal creatively with obstacles that you may encounter throughout the project. The challenges we encountered have not always been easy, but we have always tried to find a good solution that meets everyone's needs. The intensive work in schools has made many parents, pupils and teachers feel more connected to each other. It would be a shame if all that work was lost. We have written a story together with the schools, teachers, parents and pupils. It would be a shame if the book were to disappear into the book cupboard."

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Contact before you contract, understand your partners:
 - » Open and honest communication
 - » Be transparent
 - » Mapping the school's fears and pitfalls
 - » Invest in conversation
 - » Invest in getting acquainted
- Invest in partners – possible collaboration
- Invest in bridge figures
- Create a network around the school
- Regular attendance at schools
- Look around near your school
- With two you have more carrying capacity (complex theme)

Remember small steps are also steps!
Likewise, ending up somewhere else you expected is also progress.

More support for young people using a multi-agency approach would give access to a wider range of information and expertise. For example, many refugee students do not understand their legal position or their basic human rights and entitlements.

Other students need to have regular psychological and therapeutic support. Panels made up of professionals from different agencies and disciplines could draw all this expertise together. In addition, existing services should be advertised appropriately in local schools, churches, and other community settings, so that referrals can be made easily. It is crucial to remember that not all families have access to the internet.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

One recommendation was to take a broader view of what expertise and other specific requirements newcomers would find useful in helping them prepare themselves for becoming entrepreneurs. **Make a wide range of opportunities available to newcomers supporting skill-building, which can feed into employment and self-employment.**

Drawing on other newcomers who have a more settled residence status can help to share information about job searches and other types of support. Training needs to be flexible to fit around the individual lives, particularly women.

New support for newcomer entrepreneurs should be coordinated with existing forms of support for entrepreneurs to avoid duplication. Providing access to different types of support organisations and funding bodies had been valuable.

However, gaining trust is a very slow process and referring people to other agencies can result in newcomers potentially dropping out of the project. Social assistance or benefits also need to be considered. **It might be interesting to combine education, professional integration (through entrepreneurship) and social assistance for a future project such as SIREE.**

The financial and legal systems for starting a business in the Netherlands and Belgium is very complex. Local councils have an important role to play in supporting newcomers to become entrepreneurs. They could check whether newcomers have adequate language and other skills before exploring entrepreneurship as an option.

Local councils could provide premises for shops and other financial assistance, to ensure people can start business ventures. Authorities in the area need to provide support for the SIREE project, so that it becomes embedded long-term. **More lobbying is needed to welcome newcomers and highlight their value, rather than their cost.**

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PROJECTS

- Provide enough guidance
- Diversity and migration are difficult, sensitive themes
- Please note that not all partners can achieve all the objectives
- Objectives tailored to the possible
- No school, partner or individual is the same
- Provide enough time to close a project
- Consider the personal impact of a project

REGARDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

Project partners found the initial research, reports and presentations were useful for preparing lessons and workshops. The regular partner meetings were felt to be valuable through the exchange of ideas, use of games and other group work.

The atmosphere at the meetings was encouraging and it was good to meet other people passionate about wanting to do something positive with newcomers. The emphasis on accountability was recognised as important, but often felt an extra burden. There was an underestimation of the time that the evaluation measures – for example logs, action plans, participant lists, ebooks and case studies – would take. This should be made more explicit in future projects.

An example of the many outcomes that have resulted from the work is discussed by a partner of the SIREE project:

"After this project there will be a lesson box for working with adult newcomers in Learning Communities, who will continue the LC method. The module for teacher training colleges, felt to be really useful, will be requested next year. Many teachers were inspired by the workshops provided. I wrote an article on parental involvement and newcomers, which was read by many students. I have even applied for funding to do further research on parental involvement and newcomers. All these actions and products are attributable to this project."

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19

The introduction of lockdown measures in the four countries of the SIREE project had an immediate effect. Schools were closed. Meetings started to take place online. There was a widespread shift to online working, but for the SIREE project it highlighted the unequal access to digital skills and services. How to address these inequalities informed the way in which the SIREE project responded to the pandemic.

SCHOOLS

In March 2020, some of the LCs were well-established and in their second year but others were in their first year. The initial lockdown of three months meant all schools were closed and no LC activities could take place. Towards the end of 2020, the different rates at which the virus spread to countries in Europe meant a range of lockdown levels were imposed, which allowed some SIREE activities to continue but with variations between countries.

In the Netherlands, some LCs could continue but in Belgium where schools did not allow external parties to enter the premises, it was difficult to continue with LCs. It was not possible to move online because of problems with lack of digital skills, lack of access to electronic equipment or stable internet connections. Meeting the needs of attendees of LCs online was also not possible.



However, a number of initiatives were developed:

- Preparations for an adjusted open school day at the start of the academic year
- Partnerships with organisations to reach out to pupils that schools could not contact
- Providing vulnerable students with borrowed laptops from the local government
- Helping staff understand how the festival of Ramadan may affect students and answering their questions
- Meetings with parents for socially distanced walks to respond to questions

These have led to the development of stronger working relationships between parents, children and teachers, partly because the process of finding new opportunities brought people together.

TEACHER TRAINING

As part of the teacher module, students in Belgium developed specific actions at the request of participating pre-primary and primary schools to help support teachers and students.

These included:

- Digital skills
- Activities to improve host country and foreign language learning
- Visualisation of mathematical exercises
- Reception of newcomers
- Interactive talking boards
- Visual games for the playground
- Support movement or gymnastics lessons with symbols to show moves

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

During the pandemic period, the University of Greenwich ran three webinar workshops on YouTube and Facebook Live, which were premiered at a certain time and made available afterwards. Following the live broadcast of the three webinars, they now appear on the [Project SIREE YouTube channel](#) set up in August 2019. Webinars were advertised to those who had attended workshops and completed an Entrepreneurial Action Plan (EAP). Other webinars were run on Facebook Live, advertised via partners and their own networks. In addition, they used LinkedIn, Facebook and personal targeting of potential participants. Some paid advertising was used for the first session to test the impact and success of attracting people to the webinar.

The Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns in all of our partner regions had a significant impact on the entrepreneurs accessing support from SIREE. Partners offered support and resources to those who had already undertaken workshops and EAPs, but many lost contact with beneficiaries. As one of our entrepreneurs stated at the UK focus group for the network in January 2021: "Motivation is hard when doors are closed".



Alongside the mental health impact of the crisis, there were fewer grants available for new businesses as governments sought to focus on keeping existing businesses going. Disposable income in each country reduced, leading to fewer customers. New entrepreneurs could not sell products physically through many stages of lockdown, and market stalls and restaurants suffered a loss in trade.

As previously mentioned, many people we worked with found employment due to the need to earn money to support their families. In a case in the UK, a person wanted to start selling bread from home, but instead found employment at a kitchen where workers no longer felt safe travelling to their job. The Covid-19 pandemic did however provide more opportunities for online one-to-one meetings, which allowed more tailored support to be provided to individual newcomers.

PARTNER MEETINGS

Partners had mixed responses to the restrictions imposed by COVID-19. It meant that partner meetings had to be online, providing relief from travelling but opportunities for social interaction were reduced. It did offer new opportunities for partners to share their experiences about dealing with the impact of the pandemic. Also, short meetings could be organised quickly which made the project more responsive to the needs of partners. In the long-term, some of the responses to the pandemic can be used as additional measures to stimulate social inclusion.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Newcomers starting a new life in a place far away from home can achieve highly to integrate into society and feel like a valued member, helping both themselves and the economy. A helping hand is always needed however to support families and individuals, especially children, to grow up feeling embraced by the communities they live in.

Asking for help is one of the most difficult things to do, so having ready-made ideas, activities, and policies through school and work to make migrants feel enriched and confident is vital. Just a job or a dream fulfilled? Helping newcomers feel valued through work and encouraging their entrepreneurial ambitions is something each newcomer will cherish and hopefully pay forward for generations to come.

SIREE in Action

Something that in a nutshell illustrates the hard work and combined effort of the SIREE project partners is the [story of Kemal](#) at University College Roosevelt (UCR) who shares how communication, support, and understanding, is vital to progress in school, life and work. Have a watch of other videos on the SIREE YouTube channel, where you can learn about the difference this project has made to the lives of migrants and refugees in the 2 Seas region.



For further observations by the SIREE project partner organisations, please read the partner introductions at Appendix 1.1.

Appendix

Appendix 1.1 - Partner introductions



UNIVERSITY of GREENWICH



University of Greenwich

Why this partner is involved

The University's 2017-22 strategy has enterprise at the heart of its growth plans, enhancing science and society through inspiring research and enterprise. The University of Greenwich has created entrepreneurship programmes within the curriculum and outside of it, supporting new student and graduate business idea generation and start-ups.

The project was delivered by the [Generator](#), the university's student enterprise team based in the Powerhouse – a new enterprise hub that houses entrepreneurial teaching, learning and practice. The Generator works with students and graduates from all areas within the university. Its mission is to work with people who have ideas they want to pursue, as well as running business challenges, workshops and delivering university-wide entrepreneurship initiatives.

The Generator has experience working with migrant-led businesses as the university is an endorsing body for the UK start-up visa scheme. Under this scheme, eligible graduates can be endorsed if they fit the criteria and pass a selection process after which the Generator monitors the progress of their business.

The benefits and impact

The University of Greenwich benefitted from developing new social innovation activities, which contributes to its strategic goals and sustainability objectives. Our academics analysed qualitative and quantitative data to help the social capital and the value newcomers can bring to host communities, which will inform their teaching and benefit the wider student population.



**University of
Applied Sciences**



VIVES University of Applied Sciences

Why this partner is involved

VIVES is a higher education institute, with experience in innovative practical research, and offering services to society. In the education programs we ensure that VIVES students contribute to the globalised world both as human beings and as professionals. VIVES works closely together with the local and regional “enterprises” and organisations.

Using applied research, VIVES wants to provide answers to current needs from local organisations and SMEs. VIVES has several Centres of Excellence and research groups. Our goal is to develop practice-oriented research, in a collaborative way, in an either regional, national or international context. Social service provision is in addition to teaching and research an important third pillar of VIVES. Education cannot be separated from the society in which we live and therefore these three pillars are constantly subject to changes.

The benefits and impact

SIREE aligns with the core focus of both the Expertise Centre on Social Innovation, and the Expertise Centre on Educational Innovation of VIVES. Given their respective expertise on social inclusion of vulnerable groups and on the education system, the SIREE project was a great opportunity for the centres to join forces to tackle the issue of inclusion of newcomer families.

SIREE has particularly enlarged our network with schools in the broad region, with social service organisations that work on social inclusion, and with newcomer students and parents. It has deepened our understanding of the process of social inclusion of newcomers, the process and application opportunities of design thinking, and our understanding of how a pre-service teacher training that addresses the current needs of the multicultural society and schools should look like. This has yielded new insights and real life examples for the training of teachers and social workers which are brought together in a new module on the inclusion of newcomers and will inform the curriculum reconstruction of the teacher training.

To maximise the benefits of the collaboration with the educational field, our students will create culturally sensitive teaching materials for the participating schools. Furthermore, SIREE has motivated the involved VIVES partners in conducting future research. A VIVES-financed research project that focuses on the inclusion of newcomers in higher education tracks is already running, while the researchers are looking out to take SIREE to the next level in developing new innovative research projects with international partners.



Medway Plus

Why this partner is involved

Medway Plus was created in 2015 specifically to work with our regions' most deprived and hard to reach communities. Following significant budget cuts made by the local authority, there was a huge gap in provision and support for those communities most in need, particularly the growing numbers of refugees, migrants and newcomers.

Projects delivered included, initially with Medway Council and since 2015 through Medway Plus, The Migration Impact Fund (UK Government); CEMENTITT (follow up to Migration Impact Fund); Local Engagement for Roma Inclusion (Fundamental Rights Agency); AIMER and AGIR (Interreg Channel and 2 Seas Programme); Controlling Migration Fund (UK Government) and now SIREE.

Our competencies and experiences working with migrant communities include, providing language lessons, tackling employment issues, engagement, culture, education and health and wellbeing. We have worked across all generations and one of our strengths is our local knowledge and acceptance by community leaders.

We have created guides for employer's specific to migrants, a Study on Access to Local Services for migrants and the production of a "Comic Book" with real stories of experiences of migrants in England and France. We cooperate closely with the South East Strategic Partnership for Migration, who deal with many of the 8,400 refugees and migrants who have entered the region since 2003. Typically, with 600 refugees per year.

The benefits and impact

Medway Plus increased its knowledge, experience, skills and understanding through collaboration with residents and professionals in other environments and in other countries with new partners. This in turn meant a better focus and outcome for the residents of Kent and Medway.

We gained and benefitted from the academic point of view to focus on realistic outcomes and outputs for the refugees and migrants of our region. Our strength is in the delivery of projects. With emphasis on study and research by the academic partners, this can only benefit Medway Plus in the wider context.

This will result in benefitting our wider community and contribute to the social challenges our 2 Seas region is facing.



University College Roosevelt (UCR)

Why this partner is involved

UCR offers expertise in development and evaluation of educational interventions, aimed at and fostering civic and social competences of young people in vulnerable communities. We specialise in seeking resolutions of the global problems at the local level and focus on closing the gap between academia and the civic community, with projects involving local communities and institutions of province Zeeland including Zeelandic Flanders.

For example, we have a long-standing tradition of working with local schools on strengthening (global) civic competences of youth. UCR researchers and students are also engaged in projects involving communities at refugee centers. As a university, UCR has a strong communications function and coordinated communication in the SIREE project.

The benefits and impact

UCR seeks to foster and strengthen the fundamental values concerning global citizenship as formulated by Theodore, Franklin, and Eleanor Roosevelt, projects such as SIREE allow UCR to realise it in several ways.

Researchers and students at UCR:

- Gained first-hand insight into the circumstances facing refugees and contributed to improvement of migrants' situation in the Netherlands
- Investigated conditions affecting entrepreneurial possibilities available to migrants in the region to help local authorities in creating programs and information platforms supporting migrants starting new business
- Developed and promoted improvements in education to foster better social and economic integration of migrants and refugees

This way, the project created an opportunity for the involvement of UCR in social issues present in the community, contributing to "embedded academia" and to enhance UCR's profile as a local force promoting global citizenship values. The SIREE project also allowed UCR to strengthen existing and build new relationships with partners.



City of Mechelen

Why this partner is involved

In Mechelen 30% of inhabitants have a foreign origin, and 1 in 2 children are born into a non-Belgian family. Mechelen has a strong experience in integration of migrants. Since the end of 2015, Mechelen has developed the M-Power plan for refugees: the first stage is about housing. The second stage focuses on finding a permanent place to live, simultaneously finding work/working and learn the Dutch language, integrating children into school and supporting parental participation.

A specialised trauma centre offers psychological help and cooperates with schools and teachers. Citizens are asked to help not only logistically, but also in social cohesion projects. In 2016, Mechelen won the World Mayor Project for its approach in welcoming refugees, and offering them safety, shelter and support. In 2017, Mechelen developed an action plan towards vulnerable families and migrant/refugees to strengthen parental participation and school attendance. It is a cooperation between primary and pre-primary schools in Mechelen and several NGOs and expertise centres, coordinated by the city: combining their expertise.

The benefits and impact

The SIREE project offered the opportunity to broaden the target group to secondary schools, and cooperate with partners in the 2 Seas region in developing methods based upon co-creation. Mechelen also developed Café Herman, which supported migrant entrepreneurs. The project offered the opportunity to broaden the current employment support to entrepreneurship and use its expertise of this project Café Herman for the new target group of refugees. The SIREE project aligns with the core focus of both the action plan and Café Herman! The involvement in SIREE has benefitted Mechelen in multiple ways. Concerning economic integration, SIREE broadened our range of instruments that we can use to support migrant entrepreneurs to start their own business.

Concerning educational integration, SIREE gave us the opportunity to deepen our knowledge about barriers of parental participation and feelings of belonging in a school context (for parents as well as their children). Together with teachers, students and parents, we could experience what it really meant to “jointly make school into a common ground for every stakeholder”. Parents crave an open and warm school culture, and a municipality can support them by organising Learning Communities, that are maybe small-scale and sometimes informal, but at the same time meaningful. When it sincerely starts from their needs, it automatically leads to a good dialogue and real meetings between people (no matter their function or background).



ADICE

Why this partner is involved

Created in 1999 in Roubaix, ADICE works on the promotion and socio-professional inclusion of people with fewer opportunities through international activities of training, engagement and mobility. Each year ADICE supports around 250 people facing discrimination (people in priority quarters, unemployed people, people with migration background) to facilitate their professional inclusion.

ADICE has developed various methods and tools, including a pedagogical scheme, skills portfolio and online platform. ADICE cooperates with organisations who support high numbers of refugees e.g. ALEFPA or OFII. ADICE's objective is to increase access to the labour market for people facing discrimination because of their migrant background.

The benefits and impact

Thus, ADICE has participated in the creation of pedagogical tools, and has integrated these tools in its practice and programs. For example, the website "How to be an entrepreneur abroad" will continue to be disseminated during the pedagogical accompaniment to the target group even after the end of the project.

The SIREE project has also enabled ADICE to become even more involved in the development of self-entrepreneurship and to develop new methods and approaches with the aim of facilitating the creation of businesses for people with a migratory background.

For example, the entrepreneurship workshops set up will continue to be implemented several times a year even after the end of the SIREE project. The partnerships created for their implementation, such as the relationship with the BGE and the GRDR, will promote the accompaniment of people interested in creating a business. Thus, this project has been and continues to be complementary with the activities of ADICE.



Municipality of Middelburg

Why this partner is involved

The municipality is responsible for the integration of refugees in the city. It has years of experience with labour participation of refugees and has developed a knowledge of an integrated approach: offering housing in combination with activities and schooling for refugees, something which makes youths better prepared for entry to the job market.

The municipality has strong connections with Vluchtelingen werk Zuid West Nederland, who have supported 6,000 refugees, many from the Middle East since 2011. It has identified self-employment as a new economic opportunity and will build upon its networks and relationship for the project.

The benefits and impact

Middelburg has received high numbers of refugees from the Middle East, mainly from Syria, who are highly enterprising, presenting an opportunity. Participation in the project helped to stimulate refugee integration economically, through improved educational processes and with attention for emancipation. The municipality learned from barriers experienced by refugees, in that way not acting in standard cultural patterns.

We benefitted from an improved understanding of job creation gained through international cooperation that resulted in greater self-employment for the economic growth of our region. Our business mentor network was expanded.

In education, the project provided many new learning opportunities, as we discovered new practices beyond our region. Within Learning Communities, immigrant students and parents had an open dialogue with the school boards and educators about all sorts of topics that were important to the community. This way, through co-creation, immigrant students and parents can help shape the curriculum and facilities needed for improved educational integration.



ARhus

Why this partner is involved

Open knowledge centre ARhus is a library focusing on literacy in the broadest sense of the word, thereby helping to ensure every citizen participates in a constantly evolving society. Based on the strengths and ambitions of the city of Roeselare, working on education, entrepreneurship and inclusion are at the core of our mission and vision. SIREE was a great opportunity to strengthen our position in the fields of education and entrepreneurship, and to reach new and larger groups of people with a migration background

The benefits and impact

For education, we no longer limit our collaboration with schools to offering books and other library materials. We now support schools to strengthen the knowledge and skills of parents, pupils and teachers and to broaden their network. In entrepreneurship, SIREE helped us create an accessible and informal location in the city centre where new entrepreneurs can ask for help. For multiple reasons, the starters cannot go anywhere else. SIREE allowed us to build new partnerships and to gain more trust in local communities. This adds to successful initiatives that already existed, such as conversation tables or learning materials for non-native speakers. SIREE had a considerable impact on ARhus as an organisation:

- The first major European project where colleagues from different teams worked together
- Our network was increased and the existing network was strengthened
- We found new partners with whom we can collaborate outside SIREE
- Stronger connection with schools (pupils, parents, teachers and principals). As we were often present at the schools, we understand the internal functioning and needs.
- The services for non-Dutch speakers were broadened and we were also able to guide new clients to our existing programs and services
- The competencies of our employees were strengthened and we were able to provide training. ARhus made new contacts to better understand the needs of the target group
- A closer bond grew with the entrepreneurs (mentors) and even a small network of food businesses was created which our ARhus Café can continue to work with
- City services see the potential of ARhus in the fields of education, entrepreneurship and inclusion. Therefore, we can have greater influence on local policy



House of Learning (Huis van het Leren)

Why this partner is involved

The House of Learning provides learning career guidance through “Leerwinkel”, aimed at adults and with a special focus on disadvantaged groups. Learning career counselling is a neutral service that helps adults with learning needs on their way to a suitable training offer. Objective information is provided about the learning opportunities that fit within the personal circumstances of the adult.

The guidance makes the link between:

- 1) The various options within the broad and complex landscape of adult education and training
- 2) The adult with its specific context

Based on this basic approach, House of Learning takes on a signal function, as well as all kinds of initiatives with regard to lifelong and life-wide learning, with the aim of facilitating the professional and personal development of adults. In concrete terms, it identifies, initiates, supports, optimises and develops new services through partnerships, and thus responds to the learning needs of the adult population, starting from:

- 1) Evolutions in the working career
- 2) Developments in the life course
- 3) Societal changes

The benefits and impact

In the province of West Flanders, House of Learning takes up a liaison function between partners in the broad training landscape.

Within the SIREE project we facilitated the access to lifelong learning bottom-up, where our starting point was the needs of entrepreneurs and students of adult/higher education. Based on these needs we developed new training offers to fill gaps and created a new partnership in order to meet the needs. This way SIREE can create a sustainable effect in adult education.

Appendix 2.1 Action plan template



10/10



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Page 10

A photograph of a single sheet of white, lined notebook paper. The paper has horizontal blue ruling lines. At the top center, there is a silver metal binder clip attached to the edge of the paper. The paper is slightly wrinkled and appears to be resting on a dark surface.

to do's

Appendix 3.1 Systematic literature review

Systematic literature review to identify challenges faced by newcomers, what teachers can do to help with challenges, and what competences teachers need to possess.

Barriers/Challenges new-comer students face in schools	Teacher's task	Competences
Language Barrier: (Crul et al., 2016; Szente et al., 2006): Language barrier between teachers and students and their parents.	Communicate with students with limited local language mastery (Alptekin, 2002).	<p>The combination of cultural competence and emotional competence (Peko, Sablic and Jindra, 2010).</p> <p>Communicative competence in the context of a multilingual setting is needed (Gözpınar, 2019; Peko, Sablic and Jindra, 2010).</p> <p>Knowledge of expressing body language, capacity to listen to students, interpret what they say properly, an open and understanding attitude (Alptekin, 2002).</p> <p>Knowledge of other language, ability to adapt teaching style, patient and determined attitude (Byram, 1997; Rutter and Jones, 1998).</p> <p>Communicative competence (Kopish, 2016).</p>
	Teach student the new language (Byram, 1997; Rutter and Jones, 1998).	The skill to teach students new vocabulary and grammar (Byram, 1997; Rutter and Jones, 1998).
	Communicate and keep contact with parents of students with a migration background, parents with limited local language mastery. Not just for practicalities as payments or permission slips but also because students will benefit from their parents being informed on what is happening with regards to their children's academics (Szente et al., 2016, Haynes 2017)	Communicative competence (Kopish, 2016)

Barriers/Challenges new-comer students face in schools	Teacher's task	Competences
Detrimental Situational Factors: Lack of stability which results in a lack of focus on academics (Stevenson and Willott, 2007). Interruption in education (Stevenson and Willott, 2007).	Support Academic Adjustment of Refugee Children: Adapting assessment criteria or manner of assessment (Petersen, 2017). Develop materials and adapt them to the education level of students (Crul et al., 2016).	
Emotional Vulnerability: Displacement, personal trauma and feeling unsafe (Crual et al., 2016; Roxas, 2011; Szente et al., 2006, Stevenson and Willott, 2007).	Create safe learning environment where students feel safe to express themselves, form connections and in this way gain understanding (Gözpınar, 2019). Build community, outside of the classroom as well (Roxas, 2011). Focus on the strengths of students (Roxas, 2011).	Emotional competence, communicative competences (Zinz and Elias, 2006). Knowledge of the boundaries of an appropriate student teacher relationship, the skill to notice students when they have issues, the skill to listen to students' issues whilst remaining professional. This takes an empathic attitude (Southern, 2007).
	Teach about basic emotions and being expressive, this may help students to cope with their emotions, for trauma (Szente et al., 2006). Address the emotional stress experienced by refugee children Szente et al., 2006.	Know how to deal with traumatic stories of students (Szente et al., 2006).

Barriers/Challenges new-comer students face in schools	Teacher's task	Competences
<p>Cultural Barrier: Gap in understanding of the curriculum (Gozpinar, 2019).</p> <p>Materials are not understood by students since they have a large cultural component (Milner, 2011).</p>	<p>Understand students in order to teach effectively (Gözpınar, 2019).</p> <p>Develop materials and adapt them to make them understandable and effective for students from different cultural backgrounds (Crul et al., 2016).</p> <p>Teach topics in an interdisciplinary manner (Boix and Jackson, 2011).</p> <p>Address issues from different perspectives (Boix and Jackson, 2011).</p>	<p>The combination of cultural competence and emotional competence (Peko, Sablic and Jindra, 2010).</p> <p>Knowing languages, traditions and customs of newcomers (Milner, 2011).</p> <p>Cultural competence to understand students and identify their needs (Szente et al., 2006; Milner 2011).</p> <p>Knowledge of student's culture (Gozpinar, 2019)</p> <p>Knowledge of different cultures, ability to reflect on existing materials, skill to adapt these materials. This requires an open-minded and flexible attitude (Bryam, Nichols and Stevens, 2001; Milner, 2011).</p> <p>Open-mindedness is important in developing cultural competence as well. Cultural competence to develop and adopt teaching materials, managing a class, communicating with students and their parents (Kopish, 2016).</p> <p>Knowledge of one's own and other's culture, ability to reflect on the differences and similarities. An open-minded and caring and critical attitude is needed (Milner, 2011; Kopish, 2016).</p>

Appendix 3.2 Rubric items for evaluation of student work

These items should be included in grading rubrics of different student assignments in such a way that ideally every item is included in at least one graded work for each student. These rubrics will all be collected and extracted items used for evaluation of module reaching SIREE learning objectives.

General Learning Objectives (GLO)

- 1) The student is aware of the current position of refugees and migrants in the educational system of the host country and understands the importance of education for the emancipation and social integration of refugees and migrants.
- 2) The student is aware of specific challenges newcomers face and is able to act upon this within the class, school and local environment (e.g. displacement, lack of insight into expectations and settings of educational system taken for granted by locals, language barrier, social networks and isolation, perceived discrimination in support, trust, challenges of host culture, etc).
- 3) The student is aware and acknowledges the importance of community collaboration and co-creation in education in the context of newcomers' education.
- 4) The student knows how to facilitate safe educational environment for displaced young people (newcomers), with special attention to observing and reacting to trauma and referring to professional aid workers.
- 5) The student has the basic background knowledge of and is able to find in-depth knowledge of migration in the host country: common origins of migrants; political and social situation of the countries of origin and internal diversity in these countries, cultural background of main migrant groups and internal diversity of them, national and international legal framework (e.g. UN resolution), legal regulations and constraints affecting migrants. What organisations are involved with the reception of newcomers? How is reception education organised? What is the legal framework?
- 6) The student can/knows how to involve immigrant parents in the co-creation.
- 7) The student is able to provide subject education in a diverse class adapted to educational needs of pupils in a culturally-sensitive manner.
- 8) The student is able to develop or adapt a culturally-sensitive lesson material/ curriculum.
- 9) The student has a basic expertise as a teacher of second language (of the host country) for newcomers and is able to teach in a multilingual context.

These items should be included in grading rubrics of different student assignments in such a way that ideally every item is included in at least one graded work for each student. These rubrics will all be collected and extracted items used for evaluation of module reaching SIREE learning objectives.

General Learning Objectives (GLO)	Evaluation items for students work		
	Unsatisfactory 0 1	Satisfactory 2	Good 3
1a	The student fails to sufficiently explain the position of migrants. No professional language used.	The student explains the position of migrants using professional language.	The student explains the position of migrants in detail using professional and accurate language.
1b	The student does not present any arguments for the relevance of education for the emancipation of refugees and migrants.	The student presents arguments for the relevance of education for the emancipation of refugees and migrants.	The student presents several convincing arguments for the relevance of education for the emancipation of refugees and migrants.
2a	The student demonstrates insufficient knowledge of the specific challenges for newcomers.	The student demonstrates knowledge of the specific challenges for newcomers.	The student demonstrates sufficient knowledge of the specific challenges for newcomers.
2b	The student demonstrates insufficient knowledge of strategies and makes insufficient use of these to map or assess the initial situation at class and school level.	The student demonstrates strategies to map or assess the initial situation and makes inquiries at class and school level.	The student demonstrates strategies to clearly map or properly assess the initial situation and makes thorough inquiries at class and school level.
3a	The student does not present any convincing arguments for the relevance of cooperation in the social environment and co-creation in education in the context of education for newcomers.	The student presents arguments for the relevance of cooperation in the social environment and co-creation in education in the context of education for newcomers.	The student presents various convincing arguments for the relevance of cooperation in the social environment and co-creation in education in the context of education for newcomers.
3b	The student does not sufficiently explain how use can be made of the cumulative knowledge of students, families, colleagues and communities to strengthen education and learning, build relationships, and celebrate different forms of knowledge and experience.	The student offers some explanation of how use can be made of the cumulative knowledge of students, families, colleagues and communities to strengthen education and learning, build relationships, and celebrate different forms of knowledge and experience.	The student offers a detailed explanation of how use can be made of the cumulative knowledge of students, families, colleagues and communities to strengthen education and learning, build relationships, and celebrate different forms of knowledge and experience.
4a	The student demonstrates insufficient knowledge of strategies to create a safe learning environment for newcomers.	The student demonstrates sufficient knowledge of strategies to create a safe learning environment for newcomers.	The student demonstrates knowledge of several strategies to create a safe learning environment for newcomers and is able to justify why these are effective.

	Unsatisfactory 0 1	Satisfactory 2	Good 3
4b	The student does not demonstrate an ability to use the strategies in a traineeship/practical situation appropriately to create a safe learning environment for newcomers.	The student demonstrates the ability to use the strategies appropriately to create a safe learning environment for newcomers at class level.	The student demonstrates the appropriate use of several strategies to create a safe learning environment for newcomers at class and school level.
5a	The student's work demonstrates insufficient knowledge of migration, such as: corresponding origin of migrants, the diversity within the country of origin, political and social situation in the country of origin, the cultural background of the largest groups of migrants and the diversity within those groups, national and international legislation (e.g. UN resolution), legal constraints applicable to migrants, and knowledge of national organisations involved in the migration process.	The student's work demonstrates basic knowledge of migration, such as: corresponding origin of migrants, the diversity within the country of origin, political and social situation in the country of origin, the cultural background of the largest groups of migrants and the diversity within those groups, national and international legislation (e.g. UN resolution), legal constraints applicable to migrants, and knowledge of national organisations involved in the migration process.	The student's work demonstrates in-depth knowledge of migration, such as: corresponding origin of migrants, the diversity within the country of origin, political and social situation in the country of origin, the cultural background of the largest groups of migrants and the diversity within those groups, national and international legislation (e.g. UN resolution), legal constraints applicable to migrants, and knowledge of national organisations involved in the migration process.
5b	The student's work contains no reference to sources that contain knowledge of migration in the host nation.	The student's work contains references to sources that contain knowledge of migration in the host nation.	The student's work contains references to reliable sources that contain knowledge of migration in the host nation.
6a	The student does not demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the effective forms of parental involvement.	The student demonstrates sufficient knowledge of the effective forms of parental involvement.	The student demonstrates sufficient knowledge of the effective forms of parental involvement and shows the ability to justify personal choices or choices of the school.
6b	The student demonstrates insufficient knowledge of the barriers to and opportunities for reaching and involving parents of newcomers' children.	The student demonstrates sufficient knowledge of the barriers to and opportunities for reaching and involving parents of newcomers' children.	The student demonstrates sufficient knowledge of the barriers to and opportunities for reaching and involving parents of newcomers' children and shows that they take these into account.
6c	The student demonstrates insufficient knowledge of the importance of a culturally responsive attitude and multilingual communication in the cooperation with parents.	The student demonstrates sufficient knowledge of the importance of a culturally responsive attitude and multilingual communication in the cooperation with parents.	The student demonstrates sufficient knowledge of the importance of a culturally responsive attitude and multilingual communication in the cooperation with parents and shows appropriate use of these.

	Unsatisfactory 0 1	Satisfactory 2	Good 3
6d	The student does not apply any communication models to open dialogue with parents who speak a foreign language.	The student applies a few communication models to open dialogue with parents who speak a foreign language.	The student applies a wide range of communication models to open dialogue with parents who speak a foreign language.
6e	The student does not sufficiently explain how he/she can seek an optimal learning and living environment at school, together with parents and teachers.	The student offers some explanation of how he/she can seek an optimal learning and living environment at school, together with parents and teachers.	The student offers a detailed explanation of how he/she can seek an optimal learning and living environment at school, together with parents and teachers.
7a	The student does not question their own reference framework, the self-evident and their own truth, or does not do so sufficiently.	The student explores their own reference framework, the self-evident and their own truth.	The student questions their own reference framework, the self-evident and their own truth in every lesson.
7b	The student is unable to demonstrate that they are aware of their own judgement or prejudice.	The student is aware of their own judgement or prejudice.	The student is aware of their own judgement or prejudice and is able to respond to this with a resulting shift in their own attitude and behaviour.
7c	The student lacks (sufficient) awareness that identity is not a clear and definite concept, but a dynamic whole.	The student is sufficiently aware that identity is not a clear and definite concept, but a dynamic whole.	The student is well aware that identity is not a clear and definite concept, but a dynamic whole.
7d	The student recognises diversity, but has minimal interest in learning more about it.	The student recognises diversity and shows an interest in learning more about it.	The student recognises diversity and has a keen interest in learning more about it.
7e	The student shows only a superficial understanding of the complexity of some or all of the elements that are important for people with a different culture (e.g. religion, language, social relationships, etc.).	The student shows an understanding of the complexity of some or all of the elements that are important for people with a different culture (e.g. religion, language, social relationships, etc.).	The student shows an understanding of the complexity of some or all of the elements that are important for people with a different culture (e.g. religion, language, social relationships, etc.) and takes these into account.
7f	The student does not take into account the different cultural backgrounds of the children in the class.	The student sufficiently takes into account the different cultural backgrounds of the children in the class.	The student takes into account the different cultural backgrounds of the children in the class in every lesson.
7g	The student does not seek ways of using cultural differences as significant added value, or does not do so sufficiently.	The student seeks sufficient ways of using cultural differences as significant added value.	The student seeks ways of using cultural differences as significant added value in every lesson.

	Unsatisfactory 0 1	Satisfactory 2	Good 3
7h	<p>The student does not provide a safe learning environment where every child is encouraged, or does not do so sufficiently.</p> <p>The student gives little consideration to the needs and requirements of every child.</p> <p>The student takes (too) little time or opportunity to invest in a relationship with every child.</p> <p>The student is insensitive to the experiences of the under-represented pupils/groups in the class.</p> <p>The student dare not intervene where necessary.</p> <p>The student does not respond to inappropriate comments made during lectures, discussions, class councils, etc. Or makes them himself or herself.</p>	<p>The student sufficiently provides a safe learning environment where every child is encouraged.</p> <p>The student is mindful of the needs and requirements of every child.</p> <p>The student takes sufficient time and opportunity to invest in a relationship with every child.</p> <p>The student is sufficiently sensitive to the experiences of the under-represented pupils/groups in the class.</p> <p>The student dares to intervene where necessary.</p> <p>The student responds to inappropriate comments made during lectures, discussions, class councils, etc.</p>	<p>The student consistently provides a safe learning environment where every child is encouraged.</p> <p>The student is mindful of the needs and requirements of every child in every lesson.</p> <p>The student takes time and the opportunity to invest in a relationship with every child in every lesson.</p> <p>The student takes into account the experiences of the under-represented pupils/groups in the class.</p> <p>The student always intervenes where necessary.</p> <p>The student responds consistently to inappropriate comments made during lectures, discussions, class councils, etc.</p>
7i	<p>The student does not sufficiently demonstrate that their own communication style is culturally defined and does not apply this sufficiently.</p>	<p>The student sufficiently demonstrates that their own communication style is culturally defined and applies this sufficiently.</p>	<p>The student clearly demonstrates that their own communication style is culturally defined and applies this effectively.</p>
7j	<p>The student does not sufficiently demonstrate that they are integrating feedback from other people (with a different cultural background). And 'blames' the other person.</p>	<p>The student demonstrates that they are integrating feedback from other people (with a different cultural background).</p> <p>The student postpones judgement in interactions with people with a different cultural background.</p>	<p>The student demonstrates that they are integrating feedback from other people (with a different cultural background) and has the ability to propose common ground on many views and opinions in interactions with people with a different cultural background.</p>
8a	<p>The student does not view any of the subjects of the lesson from various (cultural) perspectives.</p>	<p>The student views some subjects of the lesson from various (cultural) perspectives.</p>	<p>The student views every subject of the lesson from various (cultural) perspectives.</p>
8b	<p>The student only uses examples from their own cultural reference points.</p>	<p>The student uses examples from various cultural reference points.</p>	<p>The student uses examples from various cultural reference points in every lesson.</p>
8c	<p>The student never uses material written, made or checked by people with different backgrounds/ perspectives.</p>	<p>The student occasionally uses material written, made or checked by people with different backgrounds/ perspectives.</p>	<p>The student uses material written, made or checked by people with different backgrounds/perspectives as much as possible.</p>

	Unsatisfactory 0 1	Satisfactory 2	Good 3
8d	The student demonstrates little or no insight into communication models within inter-cultural communication.	The student demonstrates familiarity with a number of communication models within inter-cultural communication.	The student demonstrates broad knowledge of and insight into communication models within inter-cultural communication.
9a	The student shows insufficient knowledge of didactic models, working methods, the CEFR for languages, listening strategies and learning strategies.	The student demonstrates knowledge of didactic models, working methods, the CEFR for languages, listening strategies and learning strategies.	The student demonstrates knowledge of didactic models, working methods, the CEFR for languages, listening strategies and learning strategies.
9b	The student does not demonstrate what the pillars of language development teaching are and how those can be integrated into lesson subjects.	The student names the pillars of language development teaching.	The student demonstrates the ability to name, explain and integrate the pillars of language development teaching in lesson subjects.
9c	The student possesses insufficient knowledge to strengthen pupils' Dutch through the use of Dutch.	The student gives pupils opportunities to strengthen their Dutch through the use of Dutch.	The student gives pupils opportunities to strengthen their Dutch through the use of Dutch.
9d	The student does not demonstrate how you deal with data about the learner and their context and, from there, how you build up communication with pupils that speak a foreign language.	The student demonstrates to some extent how you deal with data about the learner and their context and, from there, how you build up communication with pupils that speak a foreign language.	The student demonstrates how you deal discreetly with data about the learner and their context and, from there, build up communication with pupils that speak a foreign language.
9e	The student does not apply sufficient communication models to open dialogue with pupils that speak a foreign language.	The student applies a number of communication models to open dialogue with pupils that speak a foreign language.	The student applies the communication models to open dialogue with pupils that speak a foreign language.

Learning objectives not specific for SIREE GLOs: These can be included in any grading rubric they are not used for SIREE program evaluation			
AUTONOMY – INITIATIVE REFLECTION	There is no critical reflection. The student shows little insight into their own competencies. The student is not sufficiently critical about (their own) lesson material.	There is impetus for critical reflection. The student shows limited insight into their own competencies. There is little personal processing. The student is able to reflect critically on their (own) lesson material.	There is sufficient critical reflection. The student works in a solutions-oriented manner. The student is able to argue their own opinion strongly. The student integrates new solutions-oriented insights into practice. The student is able to reflect critically on their (own) lesson material.

Learning objectives not specific for SIREE GLOs: These can be included in any grading rubric they are not used for SIREE program evaluation

RESEARCH SKILLS	The chosen sources are too unambiguous. The reliability of the sources was not critically assessed. The stakeholders are irrelevant. The student does not use sources with lesson material.	The chosen sources are of sound quality and reliable. Stakeholders were consulted. The thoroughness of the research is sufficient. The student has a number of sources with lesson materials.	The chosen sources are of sound quality and reliable. The student sought a variety of sources Relevant and various stakeholders were consulted. The sources are diverse and original. The student describes (international) sources with lesson materials and background information and is able to enrich their own teaching practice.
KNOWLEDGE AND INSIGHT	The student makes insufficient use of the specialist terminology. There is no link between course > processing > vision. The knowledge of the specific professional field is insufficient. Content of responses to questions from examiners contains mistakes.	The student uses professional language and specialist terminology. There is a clear link to elements of the course. The knowledge of the specific professional field is sufficient. Content of responses to questions from examiners is mostly correct.	The student uses professional language and specialist terminology fluently. There is a clear link to elements of the course. The knowledge of the specific professional field is good. Content of responses to questions from examiners is properly substantiated.

Pass mark

<5	6 Unsatisfactory marks	12 - 13	Satisfactory marks for everything
6 - 7	4 or 5 Unsatisfactory marks	14 - 15	Satisfactory marks for everything and at least two good or excellent
8 - 9	2 or 3 Unsatisfactory marks	16 - 17	Satisfactory marks for everything and at least four good or excellent
10 - 11	1 Unsatisfactory mark and the rest satisfactory	18 - 19	Good marks for everything and at least one excellent
		20	Excellent marks for everything

Appendix 3.3 Content analysis of focus groups and interviews to inform Student Teacher Module

One respondent expressed that in an ideal world, it would be most beneficial for the overall wellbeing and capability of newcomer children that they attend regular classes at Dutch schools if the teachers there possess the required competencies regarding language support. Language support should not solely be left to separate language classes and specialised NT2 teachers. The overall level of teacher skills of regular teachers should therefore be raised, so that they know how to accommodate newcomer children in a class and how to involve them in class activities.

Two teachers expressed that a teacher has a role of introducing local norms to newcomer students. According to respondents it was most beneficial for newcomer children if a clear set of rules is laid out at the beginning of the school period. Examples of such rules that need to be addressed included: rules concerning personal hygiene and arriving on time. Such rules are an important part of the education of newcomer children, as students take the rules set right at the start with them for the rest of their educational career. Therefore, the role of first teachers should go beyond teaching Dutch language, as one respondent explained. Besides acquiring the Dutch language, newcomers are taught how to deal with cultural differences such as how to make agreements and appointments, for example. This is important because newcomers are often not used to Dutch cultural norms.

When discussing concrete methods of teaching, the respondents brought up demands requiring both social and language teaching competences. One of the respondents expressed that when teaching newcomers, going back to the earliest stages of reading and writing processes such as making sounds is preferred. From this point onwards, the participation of students is highly encouraged. One respondent underlined here that the teachers should not be the only person talking during the class. Getting newcomer children to participate is no easy feat, as these children are often traumatised. A circumstance to which teachers are limited in their ability to help.

All respondents preferred classes where instructions are given to a child individually rather than giving the instructions to the class. This tactic also aims to prevent children from being left behind and from not getting the attention they need. Although special digital programmes for language acquisition are used and can be useful, some respondents touched upon the fact that such digital programmes are not a one-stop solution and teachers should not rely on their students learning the language independently.

The social and communication competences were as well stressed through the barriers faced by teachers, students, and their parents at the school, according to respondents. For instance, inability of teachers of newcomer children to speak their language was a persisting barrier they run into. This is especially cumbersome as interpreters are not readily available, which leads to messages potentially getting lost in translation between the teacher, the child, and the parents. The children are often used as interpreters not only between the teacher and the parents, but also outside of school. This is one of the causes respondents give for the problem of absenteeism of students at school. Children are missing classes and thus falling back in their educational development, because they must accompany their parents to appointments to translate for them.

A respondent claimed that children do enjoy seeing their teachers engaging with their parents by asking them to participate in events and classes as long as it does not disrupt the lessons, and that students appreciate it if teachers ask them to show off certain cultural

habits, festivities or skills that the student has. Two respondents stated that teachers should engage in showing and discussing such cultural differences and differences between languages, all the while underlying that all people are equal.

Students are still processing all the things they went through before arriving in the Netherlands and often have to function as interpreters for their parents, all the while completing their Dutch language school work and homework with help being limited at home. Respondents, therefore, agreed that cheerful and enthusiastic teachers, who give off a sense of warmth and welcome gain the best results, if they closely view and react to the behaviour and development of every child and try to cater to their specific situation.

According to two respondents, the teachers of special language acquisition programmes experience strict financial constraints, constraint of time to complete programmes at the end of the school year, and have to deal with constantly fluctuating class sizes – so optimal functioning in these kinds of conditions may also require a specific set of competencies.

Content analysis of interviews, Belgium

Focus groups with teachers of non-Dutch speaking newcomers' class, Belgium

Nine people working in the field of primary education participated in a focus group on their experiences working in Anderstalige Nieuwkomers (ATN) classes in Belgium. ATN translates to non-Dutch speaking newcomers. The ATN class is meant for children who have just arrived in Belgium. The respondents of the focus group consisted of one liaison officer, two primary education teachers, one primary school director, one policy officer for the city of Kortrijk, one student of social work, one care coordinator and two teacher educators in primary education. The respondents were asked questions on the needs and wellbeing of the children, the learning environment of the children, inclusive technologies and didactics of inclusion, the alliance between the school and families and intercultural competence.

The teachers in the focus group have indicated that they did not receive any specific training on how to teach children in an ATN class. The main deficiency in preparing for teaching newcomer children they mentioned was the communication between themselves and the children. According to them the amount of effort teachers can put into communicating with the children but also with the parents is limited, by the constant pressure of having to complete the curriculum.

Yet, teachers must be there for all of their students, also the non-Dutch speaking ones, so it is important to prepare teachers for all types of classes. Sharing experience is also highly encouraged because the situation of each child will be unique and provide a learning experience for all involved. Respondents expressed teachers who get to know the home situation of the children from the ATN class create a bond of trust between them and the children, which allows for better communication and for teachers to effectively address certain situations. Furthermore, respondents applauded the idea of demonstrating in a teaching education programme that it is possible to deal well with students and parents from a different culture.

They expected teachers to create a safe learning environment for children where they are still entitled to their own norms and values, but this must match with the school to a certain degree to prevent unruly, emotionally hurt children. According to the respondents, teachers of ATN classes should, besides having patience, being respectful and flexible, also have a good knowledge of what is occurring in the world, and be open and courageous to take the necessary steps to make sure parents and children understand them correctly. They should have a warm heart and carry authenticity, as children will then feel the willingness of a teacher to invest in their wellbeing.

Focus group of a reception language class, Belgium

Ten non-native students participated in a focus group on their educational experiences in Belgium. The students, aged 11 to 28, have been in Belgium for various lengths but are all part of the OKAN class, a reception class for non-native newcomers in Belgium. These students were first asked questions on their general experience at school. Later, they were asked about their experiences with the adaptability and the level of quality of the educational programme.

The students expressed that they are taught Dutch by teachers who are friendly and consider each religion and culture. These are important characteristics of teachers for newcomers, as students find that they are then always able to talk to the teachers and to come to them with any type of problem.

This is especially important to those students who live alone, as the teachers are their first point of contact. The students emphasise that they respect the teachers, because they see the respect that the teachers have for them in return. Students do prefer that their teachers would go beyond the basic level of Dutch and teach them more difficult words.

Appendix 3.4 Reading list for Netherlands module

Topic 1: Multilingualism and Dutch as a second language

Learning Outcome 2: The basic expertise of a teacher of second language (of the host country) for newcomers and ability to teach in a multilingual context.

Core Reading

- 1) Gielen, Sara, and Isçi, Ayse. Meertaligheid, Een Troef!: Inspirerend Werken Met Meertalige Kinderen Op School En in De Buitenschoolse Opvang. Sint Niklaas: Abimo, 2015. Print. Praktijk & Visie
- 2) <https://onderwijs.hetarchief.be/media/koppen-hoe-zeg-je-dat-het-turks/A2YFcCN4Y9GYoTwaKeORaGCs> Duration: 13 minutes

Extra Reading

- 1) Coenen, J. en Heijdenrijk, M. (2010). Zien is snappen; grip op lessen Nederlands voor anderstalige kinderen. Vlissingen/ Den Haag: Bazalt/ HCO.
- 2) Kuiken, F. et al. (2013). Handboek Nederlands als tweede taal in het basisonderwijs.
- 3) Paus, H. et al. (2013 of later). Portaal. Bussum: Coutinho.
- 4) Verhallen, M. en Walst, R. (2011 of later). Taalontwikkeling op school. Bussum: Coutinho.
- 5) http://www.annabosman.eu/documents/SchravenBosman2007_000.pdf
- 6) <http://onderwijsgek.nl/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/KLANKGEBAREN.pdf>
- 7) Actuele landelijke regelgeving (ministerie OCW)

Topic 2: Social-emotional learning and culturally sensitive teaching

Learning Outcome 1: The current position of refugees and migrants in the educational system of the host country and the importance of education for the emancipation of refugees and migrants.

Core Reading

- 1) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2TSYVSpFbyE>
- 2) https://demos.be/sites/default/files/superdiversiteit_crul_e.a._2013.pdf

Extra Reading

- 1) Goedhart, R. (2018). Samenleren op een Superdiverse school. Amsterdam: SWP.

Learning Outcome 3: Providing subjects education in a culturally sensitive manner for diverse classes to meet the educational needs of pupils.

Core Reading

- 1) Simons, J. (2015). Interculturele competentie in onderwijs. Thomas More. lees: p.16 - p.24// p.37 tot en p. 45; het gaat om 9 interculturele competenties: zelfkennis – flexibiliteit – veerkracht – ontvankelijkheid – kennisverwerving - relationele competentie - communicatieve competentie – conflicthantering – Multi perspectiviteit

Extra Reading

- 1) Elderink, L. (2003). Cultuur en opvoeding. Rotterdam: Lemniscaat.
- 2) Goedhart, R. (2018). Samenleren op de superdiverse school. Amsterdam: SWP.
- 3) Hajer, M. e.a. (2016). Open ogen in de kleurrijke klas. Bussum: Coutinho.
- 4) Lieskamp, M., Van Loo, J., & Schoemaker, A. (2016). Nieuwkomers op school. Huizen: Pica.
- 5) <http://www.internationalecompetenties.be/nl/icom/interculturele-competentie/>

Learning Outcome 4: Develop and adapt culturally sensitive lesson materials/curriculum.

Core Reading

- 1) Voorbij de kleuren, Studio Globo (yearly update) see also www.dewereldinjeklas.be

Extra Reading

- 1) Goedhart, R. (2018). Samenleren op de superdiverse school. Amsterdam: SWP.
- 2) Hajer, M. e.a. (2016). Open ogen in de kleurrijke klas. Bussum: Coutinho.
- 3) <https://www.pharos.nl/kennisbank/wereldreizigers-docentenboek-methode-sociaal-emotionele-ontwikkeling-voor-nieuwkomers-op-de-basisschool/>

Learning Outcome 7: Basic background knowledge of and ability to find in-depth knowledge of migration in the host country: Common origins of migrants; political and social situation of the countries of origin and internal diversity in these countries, cultural background of main migrant groups and internal diversity of them, national and international legal framework (e.g., UN resolution), legal regulations and constraints affecting migrants. What organizations are involved with the reception of newcomers? How is reception education organized? What is the legal framework?

Core Reading

- 1) The Refugee Conventio, explained in 5 minutes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eyWtCJ1vfps>

Extra Reading

- 1) Goedhart, R. (2018). Samenleren op de superdiverse school. Amsterdam: SWP.
- 2) <https://www.pharos.nl/factsheets/eritrese-vluchtelingen/>
- 3) <https://www.pharos.nl/factsheets/syrische-vluchtelingen/>
- 4) <https://bp.skolverket.se/web/handledning/start>
- 5) <https://www.vluchtelingenwerk.nl/feiten-cijfers>
- 6) <https://www.lowan.nl/>
- 7) <https://www.coa.nl/>
- 8) <http://www.vvn.be/>

Learning Outcome 5: Facilitating a safe educational environment for displaced young people (newcomers), with special attention to observing and reacting to trauma and referring to professional aid workers.

Core Reading

- 1) <https://www.klasse.be/136913/vluchtelingen-trauma-helpen/>
- 2) <https://www.klasse.be/7126/zo-voelt-een-vluchteling-zich-snel-thuis-in-je-klas/>
- 3) Video of the Harvard Centre on the Developing Child on children with stress and trauma symptoms: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=efCq_vHUMqs

Extra Reading

- 1) Goedhart, R. (2018). Samenleren op de superdiverse school. Amsterdam: SWP.
- 2) Overveld, K. van (2018). Huizen: Pica
- 3) <https://casel.org/>
- 4) https://www.hu.nl/deeltijd-opleidingen/programma-alternatieve-denkstrategieen---pad?utm_source=shorturl&utm_medium=pad
- 5) <https://www.pharos.nl/kennisbank/wereldreizigers-docentenboek-methode-sociaal-emotionele-ontwikkeling-voor-nieuwkomers-op-de-basisschool/>
- 6) <https://www.warchild.nl/projecten/i-deal/>
- 7) <http://leonycoppens.nl>
- 8) <https://www.warchild.nl/projecten/teamup-voor-gevluchte-kinderen-in-nederland/op-school/>
- 9) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FOCTxcaNHeg>
- 10) <http://gezondeleefstijl.slo.nl/themas2/sociaal-emotionele-ontwikkeling>

Learning Outcome 8: Awareness of specific challenges newcomers face and the ability to act upon this within the class, school and local environment (e.g., displacement, lack of insight into expectations and settings of educational system taken for granted by locals, language barrier, social networks and isolation, perceived discrimination in support, trust, challenges of host culture, etc.)

Core Reading

- 1) Hajer, M. e.a. (2016). Open ogen in de kleurrijke klas. Bussum: Coutinho (Chapter 2)

Extra Reading

- 1) Goedhart, R. (2018). Samenleren op de superdiverse school. Amsterdam: SWP.
- 2) Lieskamp, M., Van Loo, J., & Schoemaker, A. (2016). Nieuwkomers op school. Huizen: Pica.
- 3) Paus, H. et al. (2013 of later). Portaal. Bussum: Coutinho.
- 4) https://www.poraad.nl/files/themas/school_kind_omgeving/ruimte_voor_nieuwe_talenten.pdf
- 5) <https://www.pharos.nl/kennisbank/wereldreizigers-docentenboek-methode-sociaal-emotionele-ontwikkeling-voor-nieuwkomers-op-de-basisschool/>

Topic 3: Parental involvement

Learning Outcome 6: The ability to engage immigrant parents

Core Reading

- 1) De Mets, J., Peleman, B., Seghers, M., Vervaet, V., & Van Laere, K. (2018). Warm, welkom en wederkerig. Naar een goede ouder-schoolsamenwerking. Inspiratieboek voor kleuteronderwijs. Gent: VBJK/SDL/UGent. Chapter 1.2 'Op zoek naar een wederkerige dialoog' & chapter 2 'De stem van ouders'

Extra Reading

- 1) Goedhart, R. (2018). Samenleren op de superdiverse school. Amsterdam: SWP.
- 2) <https://www.nro.nl/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/PROO+Leraren+en+ouderbetrokkenheid+Joep+Bakker+ea.pdf>
- 3) Pauw, L. (2018). School, ouders en wijk: samen opvoeden. Amsterdam: SWP
- 4) <https://www.pharos.nl/kennisbank/goed-ouderschap-in-moeilijke-tijden-handleiding-voor-meergezinsgroepen-met-vluchtelingen/>
- 5) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pillYlj3-iE&feature=youtu.be>

Learning Outcome 9: Awareness of the importance of community cooperation in the context of newcomer education.

Core Reading

- 1) http://www.steunpuntdiversiteitenleren.be/content/4-materiaal/3-materialen/12-wat-is-een-brede-school-een-referentiekader/2010_wat-is-een-brede-school_deel-1.pdf

Extra Reading

- 1) Goedhart, R. (2018). Samenleren op de superdiverse school. Amsterdam: SWP.
- 2) Hajer, M. e.a. (2016). Open ogen in de kleurrijke klas. Bussum: Coutinho.
- 3) Lieskamp, M., Van Loo, J., & Schoemaker, A. (2016). Nieuwkomers op school. Huizen: Pica

Appendix 4.1 ARhus Mentor Expectations

Interreg 
2 Seas Mers Zeeën

SIREE

European Regional Development Fund



Social
Innovation

SIREE ZOEKT MENTOREN MET EEN ❤️ VOOR ONDERNEMEN

Ondernemerschap zit in de lift. Maar toch is het starten van een eigen zaak niet vanzelfsprekend, zeker niet voor mensen met een migratieachtergrond. Via het SIREE-project (Social Integration of Refugees through Education and Self Employment) biedt ARhus etnische starters begeleiding bij de opstart van een onderneming. Dit doen we samen met onze partners uit het Verenigd Koninkrijk, Frankrijk en Nederland ... en misschien ook met jou!



Lieven (oprichter Bytebitten en Datatechnics): *"Als mentor hoop ik mijn ervaring als ondernemer, als leerkracht economie en bedrijfsbeheer, en als inwoner van Europa voor een stukje te kunnen doorgeven aan een enthousiaste starter die hiervoor openstaat. Ik maak graag tijd vrij om hopelijk een steentje bij te dragen aan iemands persoonlijk en economisch geluk."*

HEB JE NET ALS LIEVEN AL ENKELE JAREN ERVARING ALS ONDERNEMER? WIL JE JOUW KENNIS GRAAG DELEN EN EEN STARTENDE ONDERNEMER BEGELEIDEN BIJ DE OPSTART VAN ZIJN OF HAAR ZAAK? DAN BEN JIJ DE MENTOR DIE WE ZOEKEN!

Het doel van SIREE?

Etnische starters hebben het vaak extra moeilijk om een bloeiende zaak uit de grond te stampen. Ze hebben veelal een kleiner netwerk, moeilijkere toegang tot correcte informatie en minder zelfvertrouwen waardoor ze vaak minder succesvol zijn. Het project SIREE wil deze achterstand helpen wegwerken door een etnische startende ondernemer in contact te brengen met een mentor.

Waarom mentor worden?

Met jouw mentorschap help je niet alleen de starter, maar krijg je ook de kans om te werken aan je coachingsvaardigheden, je eigen netwerk te vergroten en kennis op te doen over interculturele communicatie. Je neemt ten volle deel aan onze superdiverse samenleving en krijgt erkenning voor de expertise en ervaring die je de afgelopen jaren opbouwde.

Wat houdt het mentorschap in?

Binnen SIREE kan je je engageren als mentor voor één of meerdere starters. De begeleiding duurt **6 maanden per starter**. Daarna ben je vrij om het contact indien gewenst verder te zetten, maar voor het project is dat geen voorwaarde. De manier en frequentie van contactmomenten kan variëren volgens de nood van de starter of de beschikbare tijd van de mentor. Daarover beslissen jullie volledig autonoom.

WIL JIJ GRAAG JE BLIK VERRUIMEN EN EEN (OF MEER) SIREE-STARTER(S) BEGELEIDEN? ARHUS ZORGT VOOR DE NODIGE ONDERSTEUNING!

Als mentor word je niet aan je lot overgelaten! ARhus is steeds beschikbaar voor vragen of verzoeken. We voorzien ook meermaals per jaar een vrijblijvend opleidingsmoment waar je meer inzicht krijgt in ervaringsgericht mentorschap, handige tools om als mentor uit de startblokken te schieten en veel meer.

Overtuigd? Super! Breng Benedicte van ARhus op de hoogte van je enthousiasme! Nog vragen of twijfels? Stuur haar een mailtje op benedicte.seynhaeve@arhus.be of geef haar een seintje via 0494 19 65 43, en laat je overtuigen.

Wil je zelf geen mentor worden maar ken je wel iemand anders met interesse? Heb je een netwerk van ondernemers die wat tijd kunnen vrijmaken voor een SIREE-starter? Verspreid deze info zeker verder!




V.U. Yves Rosseel, ARhus, De Munt 8, 8800 Roeselare

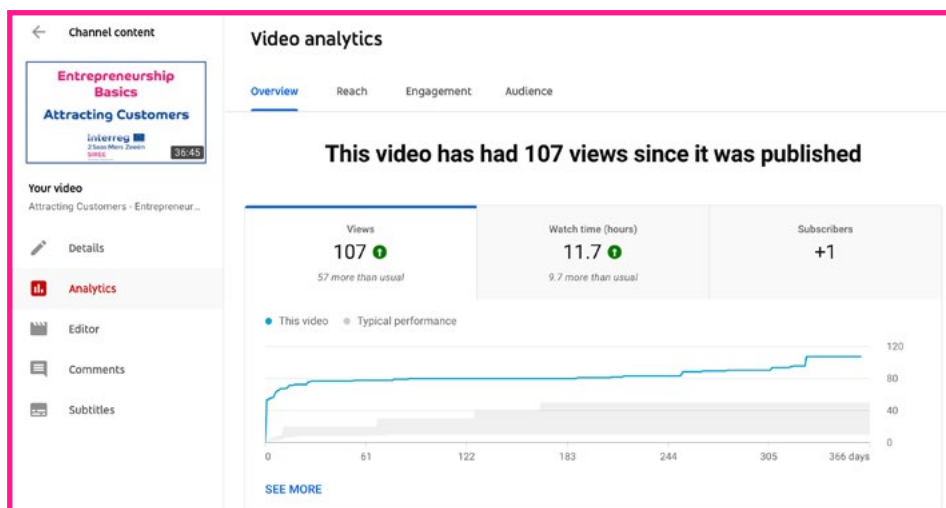
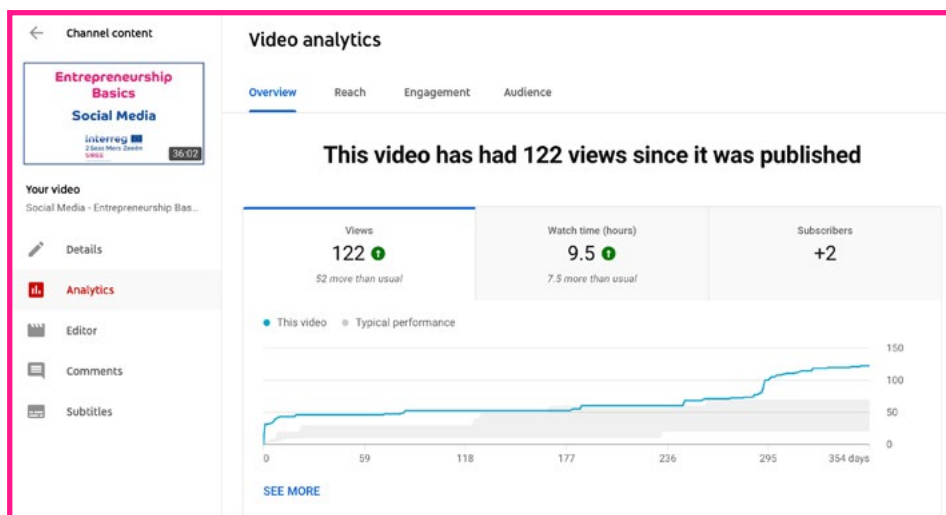
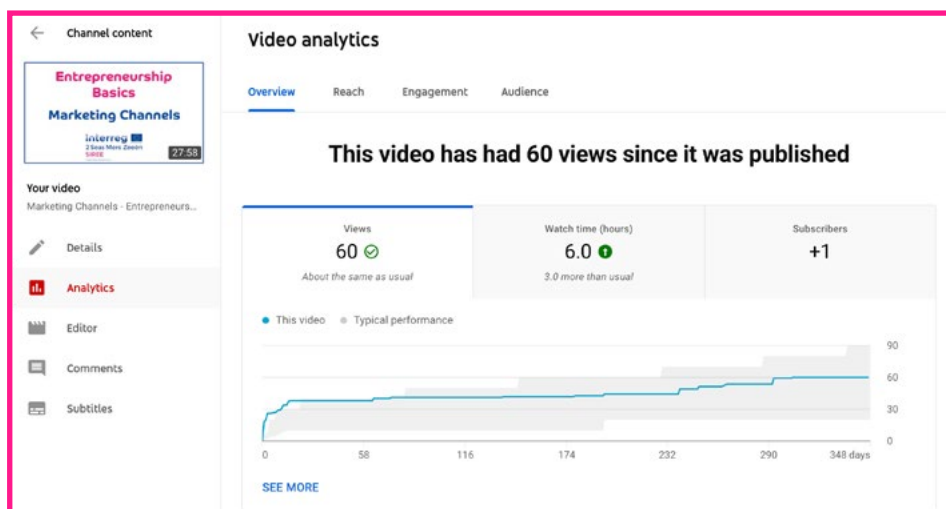
Project partners:



www.arhus.be/siree

Appendix 4.2 Webinar Data Analysis

Video	Visibility	Restrictions	Date ↓	Views	Comments	Likes (vs. dislikes)
 Marketing Channels - Entrepreneurship Basics Workshop Add description	Public	None	29 May 2020 Premiered	60	0	83.3% 5 likes
 Social Media - Entrepreneurship Basics Workshop Add description	Public	None	22 May 2020 Premiered	122	0	100.0% 1 like
 Attracting Customers - Entrepreneurship Basics Workshop Head over to our Facebook for a live Q&A at the end of the video! www.fb.com/siree.eu	Public	None	15 May 2020 Premiered	116	0	100.0% 10 likes



Appendix 4.3 Questions at each entrepreneurship workshop

- Name
- Email
- Gender
- Nationality
- Refugee Status (if known)
- What are you hoping to achieve?
- Do you currently own your own business or social enterprise?
 - » If yes: what business or social enterprise do you own?
 - » If no: do you think you'd like to open a business or social enterprise in the future or would you prefer to work for an employer? What business would you like to start?
- To what extent do you feel you have a good understanding of what it means to be an entrepreneur from 1 to 10?
- To what extent do you feel that you currently have the networks you need to set up or grow an existing business from 1 to 10?
- How would you rate your networking skills from 1 to 10?
- How would you rate your problem-solving skills from 1 to 10?
- How would you rate your knowledge of how to set up a business in UK/Belgium/France/Netherlands from 1 to 10?

Similar questions were then asked at the end:

- To what extent do you feel you have a good understanding of what it means to be an entrepreneur?
- To what extent do you feel that you currently have the networks you need to set up or grow an existing business?
- How would you rate your networking skills from 1 to 10?
- How would you rate your problem-solving skills from 1 to 10?
- How would you rate your knowledge of how to set up a business in UK/Belgium/France/Netherlands from 1 to 10?
- How was your experience of today's workshop?
 - » Why? You can include details of anything you enjoyed, anything you feel like you learnt, or anything you think could be improved.
- Would you recommend the workshop to a friend?

Appendix 4.4 Entrepreneurial Action Plan (EAP) questions

- Name of Entrepreneur:
- Email/way to get in contact:
- Date of first meeting: / /
- Have you owned a business before? **Yes/No**
- If yes, where and what was it?
- Do you currently run a business in this country?
- Further questions (For how long did you have it? Were you content? Did the profits of your business allow you to live well? Did you have employees? Do any of your family run businesses?)
- Are you currently in employment? **Yes/No**
- If so, do you feel overqualified for your role? **Yes/No**
- Do you have any qualifications not recognised by the country you are in?

- 1) What's your business idea?
- 2) Have you tested your idea on any customers yet? **Yes/No**
- 3) List three ways that you can test your idea on customers in the next six months.
- 4) Do you know who your competitors are? **Yes/No**
- 5) List three ways you'll find out more about your competition.
- 6) What kind of networks do you currently have to help you to set up your business?
- 7) Is there any knowledge or skills you'll need to set up your business that you don't have already?
- 8) How will you develop these over the next six months?
- 9) Have you thought about how you'll fund the start-up costs of your business?
- 10) List two possible funding routes you'd like to use and explain how you'll progress these over the next six months.
- 11) What stage are you hoping to be at with your business in six months, and how are you hoping your mentor can help you with this?
- 12) How do you plan on achieving this?

The self-skills analysis tool asks entrepreneurs to rank themselves at the beginning and end of their interaction with SIREE and mentorship.

1 – Do Not agree at all; 10 – Agree completely

- 1) I am a strong leader
- 2) I am determined
- 3) I am happy to take risks if I believe it is worthwhile
- 4) People trust me and consider me honest and reliable
- 5) I am confident at managing money
- 6) I can adapt to change easily
- 7) I know where to get business support to start up a business
- 8) I have a good network of friends, professionals and business contacts
- 9) I know where I could source funding for my own business
- 10) I know how to register a company in the UK/Netherlands/Belgium/France
- 11) I know the legal requirements of registering a business in the UK/Netherlands/Belgium/France

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Interreg



2 Seas Mers Zeeën

SIREE

Social Integration of Refugees through Education and Self-Employment

Written by Jane Lethbridge, Miranda Poeze, Marcin Sklad, Rachel Brown, Elaine King, Dimitri Van Maele, Stefan Dewitte, Els Vanobberghen, Abdelouahab Zahri, Athena Piterou, Bruno Daems, Charlotte Fotse, Deniza Miftari, Ewa Krolikowska-Adamczyk, Fatima Afkir, Frieke Alliet, Helen Morrish, Jack Doods, Kelly Lebon, Lianne van der Looij, Margie Camps, Marie Thibault, Mazia Yassim, Peter Vogel, Ria Goedhart, Rozemarijn Dereuddre.

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